

NINTENDO POWER



Wii U Report • New Super Mario Bros. 2 •
Adventure Time • Kingdom Hearts 3D:
Dream Drop Distance • Theatrhythm
Final Fantasy • Mighty Switch Force! HD

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RICH AND EMOTIONALLY AFFECTING
AS THE BEST IN THE GENRE."

—GAMESPOT



The Gold
Standard 54

The Mario Bros. are back, and their latest platforming adventure promises to be pure gold. Get the scoop on New Super Mario Bros. 2 for Nintendo 3DS.

Destination:
1987 60

For Nintendo fans, 1987 wasn't just great—it was totally radical. Find out why with retro-tastic looks at The Legend of Zelda, Metroid, Kid Icarus, Punch-Out!!, and more!

C'mon, Grab
Your Friends 70

Get ready to go to a very distant land. We have a look at the first screens of WayForward's upcoming N3DS and DS game, Adventure Time: Hey Ice King! Why'd You Steal Our Garbage?!



NEW SUPER MARIO BROS. 2

54

DESTINATION:

1987

DESTINATION: 1987

60



ADVENTURE TIME: HEY ICE KING! WHY'D YOU STEAL OUR GARBAGE?!

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DS = NINTENDO DS

DSi = DSiWARE

GBA = GAME BOY ADVANCE

N3DS = NINTENDO 3DS

NES = NINTENDO ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM

VC = VIRTUAL CONSOLE

Wii = Wii

Wii U = Wii U

WW = WIIWARE

POWER UP

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Pulse

A Lot to Like

Chris Slate



E3 didn't answer all of our questions about the Wii U console, but if you ask me, there was still a heck of a lot to like at the show. Sure, I would love to have gotten a glimpse of the Wii U games that studios such as Retro and Monolith are cooking up, but on the bright side, those titles are still on the way. It's easy to get hung up on the stuff we didn't get to see and overlook all of the amazing stuff that we *did* see, such as the first all-new Mario title to release alongside a system since Super Mario 64 launched with the N64; a gorgeous new Rayman side-scroller that, in some ways, seems even better than the new Mario game; arguably the most interesting and innovative survival-horror game in years; both white and black versions of the Wii U hardware; an optional controller that will rock at core games with traditional controls; four-player Pikmin; a bevy of built-in social features; top-tier M-rated titles; day-and-date digital downloads of retail games; an exclusive open-world LEGO game that actually looks really cool; Nintendo titles with honest-to-goodness HD graphics; and a launch lineup that is shaping up to be one of the best in Nintendo's history.

So yeah, there's still a lot that we don't know about Wii U, but if you ask me, we know enough—who do I give my money to?

CHRIS SLATE

EDITOR IN CHIEF



This is The Hoff here, ready to help you beat the summer heat by replying to your letters and emails! I've also got another special letter request: Now that the Wii U console has been fully unveiled, how would you like to see developers use the system's unique features? Send your responses to the address on page 8.

LETTERS

New for U

I must say, I am very happy about the fact that Nintendo is putting Wii U out on the market supported by third-party games like Assassin's Creed III and Darksiders II. I have always heard from my friends that they're great games, but I'm a huge Nintendo fan and don't own other consoles besides Wii. I think that this was a smart move made by Nintendo and I hope they continue to get popular games like that on Wii U. —ZELDAFANBOY

An Island Unto Itself

As I was reading your Ultimate Super Mario feature [in vol. 278], I agreed with almost everything, and I'm really glad Super Mario Galaxy won. But I noticed that Super Mario World 2: Yoshi's Island wasn't even mentioned! I really like that game and I think it deserves at least spot 14 over The Lost Levels. Do you guys dislike the game? —LUCAS THE NINJA Yoshi's Island is awesome! Despite sporting the Super Mario name, though, the game is different enough that for that article we considered it part of its own series. Instead of grouping it with games in which Mario is the star, Wario Land: Super Mario Land 2 was omitted for the same reason.

Royal Mess

If Peach is a princess, then who is the king? The queen? It seems like Peach runs the kingdom. Does Peach have parents? If so, where are they? This one question has been haunting me ever since I started playing Mario games. If Mario and Peach got married, would Mario be a king or a prince? Oh, no! Could Bowser be Peach's father?!

—THORNDON

Good questions. We've never seen Peach do much governing, so we suspect the chancellor does all the work. As for the last inquiry, we can only imagine Princess Peach saying, "No. No. It's not true. That's impossible! Noooooooo!"

Offer Expires While You Wait

Recently I went to this little shop that carries used video games and found this amazing deal for a copy of Super Mario Kart in its original box. Everything is in mint condition, and there was even this little ad for Nintendo Power alongside the game manual. It brought back so many nostalgic memories of childhood and of when I dreamed of a subscription (which I never got until I paid for it myself) because almost every game had these ads in them. Do you think if I sent in this application for a subscription I would receive the promised free Super NES Player's Guide?

—JESS M.

Um...no.

Thank you so much for including my favorite game of all time, Donkey Kong Country Returns, at the top of your Wii Essentials list. The game completely deserves it! On a different note, I wish you guys had included Super Paper Mario somewhere on the list. —**VISIBLECC1**



Only in Japan?

I've been a faithful reader for around 10 years now, but this is the first time I've ever been compelled to write a letter to Pulse. I'm just completely dissatisfied with the fact that there are so many fantastic NDS games that aren't reaching North American shores. Games like Fire Emblem, Professor Layton vs. Ace Attorney, and Time Travelers have yet to receive North American release dates, but it was the promise of franchises like Fire Emblem and Ace Attorney that spurred my purchase of an NDS in the first place. Will these games ever be localized?

—**JAKE H.**
Good news: Fire Emblem: Awakening has been announced for North America! As for Professor Layton vs. Ace Attorney, a Japanese release date still isn't set, so it's a bit early to fret over that one.

Join the Club

I have noticed that you always call yourself various groups of video game characters. I specifically remember Vol. 276 said The Nikkō Swapnote Fan Club. It says this at the top-right corner of page 8. I'm highly amused by that. —**JS**
Those eyes...those glasses...that coy wink...isn't everybody a member of The Nikkō Swapnote Fan Club?

The Clone Wars

I've noticed for quite a while now that Sega seems to be copying Mario, in the new Sonic & All-Stars Racing Transformed the cars turn into boats and jets; come on—everybody knows Mario just did that. If I ever see Sega Smash Bros., I'm gonna rip. —**MALKIL**
It's true that Mario can be a pretty influential guy, but to be fair, the

developers of Sonic & All-Stars Racing Transformed say their game was in the works before they ever saw Mario Kart 7. They were more than a little miffed that Mario beat them to the punch.

Dating Service

In your Game Forecast section you guys still have Animal Crossing and Paper Mario's release dates as TBA. But several weeks ago I visited my local game store and reserved both games, which I was told would be released (along with Luigi's Mansion 2) on August 2. You guys are slipping. —**NINTENDAVE**
This just goes to show that you can't believe everything you hear. Paper Mario: Sticker Star and Luigi's Mansion: Dark Moon will be out in time for the holiday season, but Animal Crossing still has no release date. (We're pretty sure it's not August 2, though.)

Smooches All Around

Chris Hoffman is a brony! Nintendo Power is (if you'll pardon the overused joke) 20 percent cooler! I saw the image in the most recent issue of Nintendo Power. In Phil T.'s review of Colors! 3D. I hope you get a lot of happy letters about this. But if you get any angry letters, only print the ones that are so rage-induced (by brony haters) that they're funny. —**DOGMAN18**

Wow! We were not prepared for the deluge of mail that this screenshot created! For anyone wondering, this drawing comes purely from the stylus and mind of the whimsical Phil T. At least, that's my story, and I'm sticking to it.



DON'T HASSLE THE HOFF

Who do you think would win in a battle between Mario, Kirby, Link, and The Hoff? Remember, The Hoff isn't a fireball-throwing plumber, isn't capable of swallowing large objects, and doesn't wield the Master Sword.

—**WILD ZASSE**

The Hoff says: It's true; other than my ability to put up with Phil T. on a daily basis, I don't have many special powers. Most likely Kirby would devour me immediately while Mario would try using his fireballs on Link, who'd use his Freshfield Earrings from Skyward Sword to make himself fireproof. He'd be all, "Oh, no you don't, fool," and then he'd knock Mario into next week. But then Kirby would sneak up behind Link, transform into a bulldozer, and clobber him. Kirby would then spit me out, victory all but assured, when suddenly Chris State would descend from orbit and crash into Kirby with an earth-rending explosion, destroying them both and leaving me as the sole survivor.

My idea is a crossover of Metroid and The Legend of Zelda. For me, and I suspect a lot of other people, it would be a dream come true.

—SHERVIN BK



What unlikely video game mashups would you like to see?

I'd like to see a Final Fantasy/ Dragon Quest crossover. I mean, seriously, they even did a crossover of Dragon Quest and Mario! Now that Square and Enix are one company, I'm even more surprised they haven't done it. —CALVIN M.

I think it would be cool to have a video game crossover in which Professor Layton would embark on a dangerous quest to teach Wario how to be a true English gentleman. You would play as Wario and have to quickly solve puzzles about polite conversation and table manners, WarioWare-style. Then, in a shocking midgame twist, Wario would turn the tables on the professor, who would be forced to escape Wario's evil prison of inappropriate doom with only his wits to rely on. —THECHOSENHERD

I would like to see Mario Kart mashed up with Super Smash Bros.—basically, I want Nintendo Kart! Link could ride Epona, Fox could fly low in an Arwing or drive the Landmaster, and the stages would have awesome possibilities! Think of Samus, Mario, and Link all racing through Hyrule Field or Skyloft. That would be really cool! —STEVE G.

The mashup of my dreams involves two of my favorite swordplay games—The Legend of Zelda and Fire Emblem. Link comes across

Marth or Roy's homeland, and they fight side by side to defeat Ganon and the Dark Dragon. It would be grid-based like Fire Emblem, but with enemies and weapons from The Legend of Zelda.

—LINK'S UPRISING

What if Dr. Eggman from the Sonic the Hedgehog series somehow found out how to revive Liquid Snake (from Metal Gear Solid)? Just think of how chaotic Solid Snake's last mission would be, teaming up with the Blue Blur in one final race to stop world destruction. (No guns for Shadow though, please.) —WARRUGGER

What about Mario Paint vs. Epic Mickey? —PLUTON FLY

I think if Samus and Mega Man ever teamed up, it would produce an awesome crossover game!

—ERIC S.

I have always wanted a mashup of Mario and Phoenix Wright! It would be so cool to see Mario,

Luigi, and Bowser in court with Phoenix Wright. Mario would say, "I didn't do it" in an Italian accent, while Bowser gets arrested for attempted murder. It would be funny watching a Goomba bail Bowser out of prison! —MUSCLES

I've always thought about a Mario/Final Fantasy crossover. You know, sort of like Super Mario RPG: Legend of the Seven Stars taken up a few notches. —SELEVE

What if Konami and Capcom made a Metal Gear/Resident Evil crossover? It would be a mix of survival horror and stealth! The characters would be mashed up too! Barry Burton and The End for their mighty beards, Big Boss and Albert Wesker as the villains, and Chris and Solid Snake could be the main characters. —MIND BRICK

I'd like to state the obvious: There should be a Mario and Call of Duty mashup. It could give "hardcore gamers" a chance to play a Mario game. —THAT GAMER

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Understand that the magazine staff is separate from Nintendo; we don't make the games.

Don't send links to game coverage on the Web—trust us; we see it all.

Don't ask about the status of upcoming games, or whether certain games will be announced; if we have that info, we'll always tell you.

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The SCORE

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IN DISNEY EP C MICKEY 2: THE
POWER OF TWO, HAS THE MAD
DOCTOR REALLY BECOME A
GOOD GUY?

YES: 19%

NO: 81%

WHAT SHOULD WE ADD TO
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TRANSFORMED?

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TOEJAM & EARL

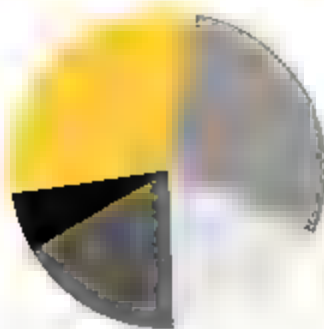
THE WEREWOLF from
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ADAM HUNTER from
STREETS OF RAGE

KAZUMA KAPYU from
YAKUZA

WHO IS MOST LIKELY TO
BETRAY MARIO?

PAULINE

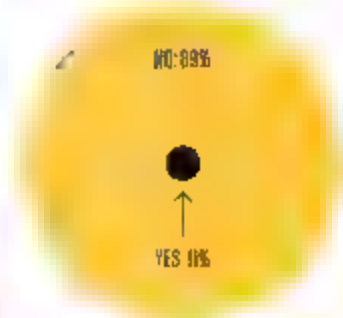


YOSHI
LUIGI
PEACH
PRINCESS PEACH

WHAT IS THE COOLEST WEAPON FROM MEGA MAN 4?



GOT CIRCLE PAD PRO FOR
NINTENDO 3DS?



GAMES BASED
ON MOVIES...

10%

Are Usually Pretty Good

90%

Usually Stink

MOVIES BASED
ON GAMES...

25%

Are Usually Pretty Good

75%

Usually Stink

WHAT FINAL FANTASY CREATURES ARE CUTEST?

MOOGLES

Moogles
Chocobos
Cactuars

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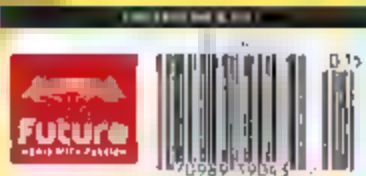
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pg. 28



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POWER UP



Wii U Comes Out to Play

Nintendo finally unveils more details on its new console and showcases the first round of games.

AFTER BEING ENROULDED in agonizing secrecy for months, the Wii U console had its full-fledged coming-out party at the recent Electronic Entertainment Expo in Los Angeles. Nintendo debuted the final design for the system's innovative new controller (dubbed the Wii U GamePad), dis-

cussed the platform's unique online functionality, and announced more than 20 first- and third-party games to be released during the launch window this holiday season.

On the following pages, we break down the hardware in more detail, then highlight the 10 most

exciting Wii U games we've sampled thus far. (Some of our choices may surprise you.) Of course, this is only scratching the surface. We'll have tons of Wii U coverage in the months to come, including in-depth previews and exclusive details on all of the system's most hotly anticipated titles. — **STEVE T.**

Wii U GamePad

1. ANALOG STICKS

The early prototype of the GamePad shown at last year's E3 featured Circle Pads similar to that on the Nintendo 3DS, but the final design replaces them with traditional analog sticks. Furthermore, each stick can be clicked by pressing straight down on it, allowing it to serve as an additional button.

2. TOUCH SCREEN

The big story when it comes to Wii U is the 6.2-inch, 16:9 aspect ratio LCD touch screen on the controller. It uses resistive touch (rather than capacitive touch like on most smart phones) to enable greater precision and the use of an included stylus.

3. CAMERA

The front-facing camera not only takes photos, but provides the system with video chat capabilities.

4. STEREO HEADPHONE JACK

Compatible with standard headphones, this built-in jack will be especially handy when using the GamePad without relying on the TV screen.

5. NEAR-FIELD COMMUNICATION

This allows the Wii U GamePad to communicate wirelessly with certain objects held above it. It's similar to the technology used by the Portal of Power for Skylanders: Spyro's Adventure.

6. STEREO SPEAKERS

Sound comes out of these.

7. MICROPHONE

Sound goes into this.

8. TV CONTROL BUTTON

Using infrared communication, the controller can function as a universal TV remote.

9. MOTION CONTROL

An accelerometer, a gyroscope, and a geomagnetic sensor power the robust motion controls of the GamePad. The controller also boasts a built-in rumble feature.



MiiVERSE

MiiVerse is a new online social space where you can create and share your own Mii characters and avatars. You can also create and share your own MiiVerse content.

Wii U PRO CONTROLLER

For a more comfortable and precise gaming experience, the Wii U Pro Controller is the perfect choice. It features a rechargeable battery and a USB cable for charging.



VIDEO SERVICES

With the Wii U GamePad, you can enjoy a variety of video services, including Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, and more. You can also use the GamePad to control your TV and other home entertainment devices.



ZombiU

1

PUBLISHER UBISOFT DEV LOPIA UBISOFT MONTPELLIER

OF ALL THE Wii U games we've sampled thus far, we're most excited about ZombiU. It's one of two provocative offerings from the

talented folks at Ubisoft Montpellier (the other, coincidentally, is on the opposite page). This Wii U exclusive drops players in the middle of a

post-apocalyptic London, where a recent outbreak has turned most of the population into mindless, flesh-eating monstrosities. That may not

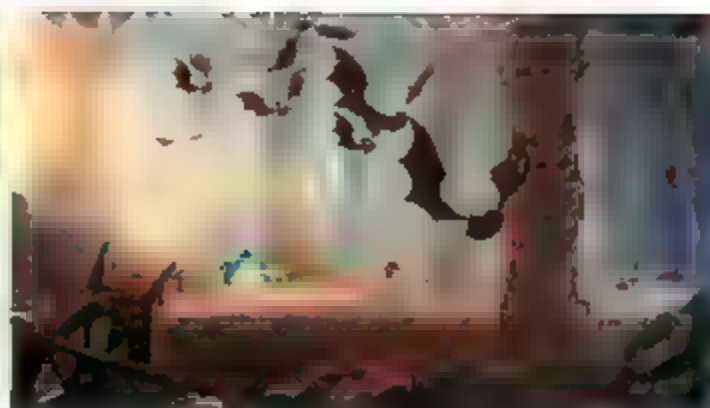
be a particularly original theme these days, but this is otherwise a pretty daring effort. Because while the rest of the first-person genre aspires to grow ever bigger and louder—like a ceaseless barrage of Michael Bay flicks—ZombiU promises honest-to-goodness survival horror, the likes of which we feared extinct.

That means ammunition and other necessities are in short supply, of course, plus the game employs a number of bold new ideas to build an uncommonly potent sense of tension. As you wield the Wii U GamePad to manage for provisions, pick locks, or remove items from your backpack for instance, events continue to unfold on the television, where the camera switches to a third-person perspective that shows any zombies bearing down on your position. Even more intense: a single bite spells the end for your onscreen persona. At that point you'll take control of a different survivor, and you'll need to track down your previous, now-infected character to recover your equipment.

If only Ubisoft would change that title—preferably to something that doesn't sound like a Syfy network movie starring Jaleel White.

—STEVE T.





Rayman Legends

2

PLAY STATION 4/PS4 DEVELOPER: UBI SOFT MONTPELLIER

ONE OF LAST year's most joyful (and tragically underappreciated) video game experiences was Rayman Origins, so we couldn't be happier that Ubisoft's timeless wonder is back so soon for another round of gorgeously hand-drawn 2D platforming. And with Rayman Legends, creator Michel Ancel and his team have accomplished what we would have thought impossible: saturating the screen with even more detail, color, and charm to give us something that surpasses the visual splendor of its



predecessor (and by a considerable margin, at that).

Legends also expands on the franchise's multiplayer hijinks. Up to four players can run through the levels via Wii Remotes or Wii U Pro Controllers while a fifth uses the Wii U GamePad to lend assistance as airborne sidekick Murfy. And unlike the helper roles in most games, playing with Murfy is actually a heck of a lot of fun: He performs all sorts of different functions, from firing slingshots at potholed dragons to

rotating spike-filled labyrinths so Rayman and company can make it through unharmed. Nobody has to play as Murfy, though; he's required only on a specially designed set of core levels. The main campaign can be completed with or without him.

The one piece of bad news? Ubisoft can't say for certain whether Rayman Legends will be ready by the end of this year. —STEVE T





Pikmin 3

PUBLISHER NINTENDO DEVELOPER NINTENDO

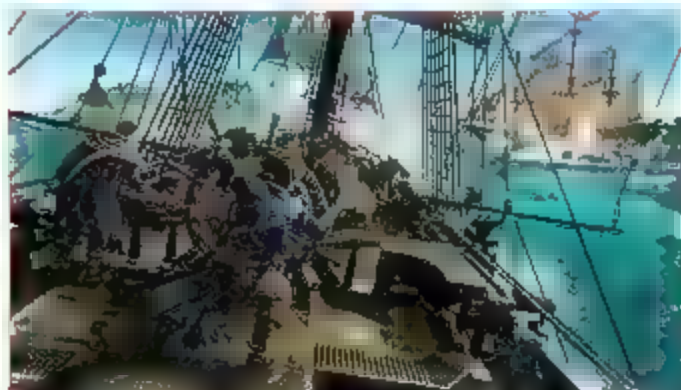
AT LONG LAST, a new installment in Shigeru Miyamoto's unique action-strategy series is nearly a reality. *Pikmin 3* lets you once again take control of a variety of adorably diminutive Pikmin creatures and command them to do your bidding—collecting items, fighting enemies, building bridges, obliterating obstacles, and more. While familiar play mechanics

3

will greet you like an old friend, there's little doubt that this will be the series's best entry thanks to additions like fantastic HD graphics

and a touch-controlled map on the Wii U GamePad. (You can also play using the Wii Remote and Nunchuk controllers.) Furthermore, this installment introduces Rock Pikmin, which can be used to shatter crystal barriers and smash through

the carapaces of armored foes. But where is series protagonist Captain Olimar? Although the game features four playable characters, he isn't one of them, leaving us to ponder the beloved captain's fate. **CHRIS H.**



Assassin's Creed III

PUBLISHER UBISOFT DEVELOPER UBISOFT MONTPELLIER

THE CRITICALLY ACCLAIMED *Assassin's Creed* series makes its Nintendo console debut with part three, which is shaping up to be the most impressive chapter to date

As previously reported, the game takes place around the time of the American Revolution, and players will seek out targets both on the frontier and in the cities of Boston

and New York. On top of that, Ubisoft recently revealed a brand-new element: naval battles. We had a chance to play through one, taking the helm of a ship to sink two

enemy vessels and board another. It was an incredible spectacle and provided a nice change of pace from the franchise's usual acrobatics. **STEVE T.**

4

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Mario, Donkey Kong, and Link TM Nintendo



New Super Mario Bros. U

PUBLISHER NINTENDO DEVELOPER NINTENDO

NO NINTENDO CONSOLE is complete without a Mario platformer. It's hard to beat the mustachioed one's world-renowned formula of magic shrooms, gold coins, moving platforms, tricky jumps, hidden vines, and warp pipes. Only a handful of levels were on display at E3, but the Mario magic was readily apparent: a lush forested area gave

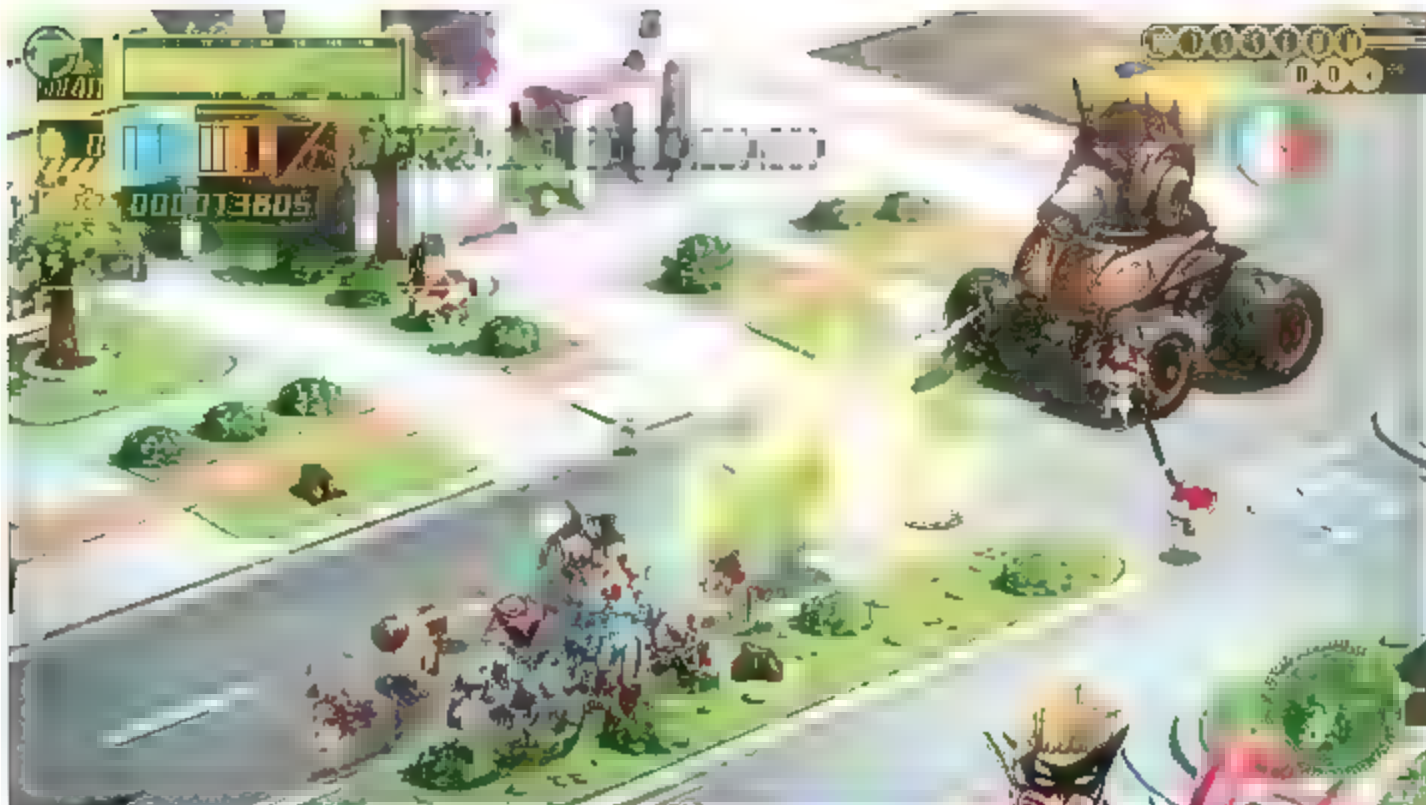
5

us a chance to soa... glide, and ring to wait using Mario's new flying squirrel suit, and in a world of giant mushroom platforms we floated

pas, dangerous Piranha Plants with an assist from an inflating pink baby Yoshi. Any level featuring slippery footing and tricky, rotating, star-shaped platforms presented additional challenges. Up to four players, controlling Mario, Luigi, Toad, or a Koopa, can simultaneously participate in the action, plus an additional player can lend a hand in Boost mode. Controlled

via the touch screen on the Wii U GamePad, Boost mode allows you to aid others by creating platforms and stunning enemies. The game also takes advantage of the Wii U console's Miiverse functionality: through an online-enabled in-game message system, you'll be able to share your accomplishments, comments, and frustrations with other players. CHRIS H.





Project P-100* 6

PUBLISHER: NINTENDO DEVELOPER: PLAYNOM GAMES

FROM THE FERTILE imagination of Hideki Kamiya (creator of Devil May Cry, Viewtiful Joe, and Okami) comes perhaps the weirdest game being prepped for the Wii U launch window. And we mean that in the most complimentary way possible.

The tentatively titled Project P-100 puts you in the shoes of Earth's would-be savior (who bears more than a passing resemblance to Joe) tasked with defending the planet against alien invaders. He can't go it alone, though; you must

assemble a squad of heroes from everyday citizens like schoolteachers and firefighters. You'll then morph your followers into all sorts of supersized objects, whether it's a fist to pummel your foes, or what looks like a huge Jell-O mold to

defend yourself from attacks. The greater your group's numbers, the more potent their transformations are. It's unlike anything we've played before, and we can't wait to dig deeper. —STEVE T

Batman: Arkham City—Armored Edition 7

PUBLISHER: WARNER BROS. INTERACTIVE ENTERTAINMENT DEVELOPER: WB GAMES MONTREAL

WE ALREADY KNEW that Batman Arkham City was going to be awesome. It is, after all, based on last year's multplatform hit, which was a huge success thanks to its robust combat system, cool gadgets, massive world, and open-ended gameplay that allows players to use brains as well as brawn. But this Armored Edition of the game (named after the new armor that Batman and Catwoman wear) promises to take the immersion factor to new heights thanks to

several exclusive extra features. A powered-up Battle Armored Tech attack mode will let you lay the hurt on thugs like never before, while the Wii U GamePad acts as your personal Batcomputer, providing you with mission objectives, maps, gadget access, and more. You'll also use the GamePad to interact with the world in a variety of ways, such as moving it around to scan environments for clues and tilting it to guide remote-controlled Batangas. —CHRIS H

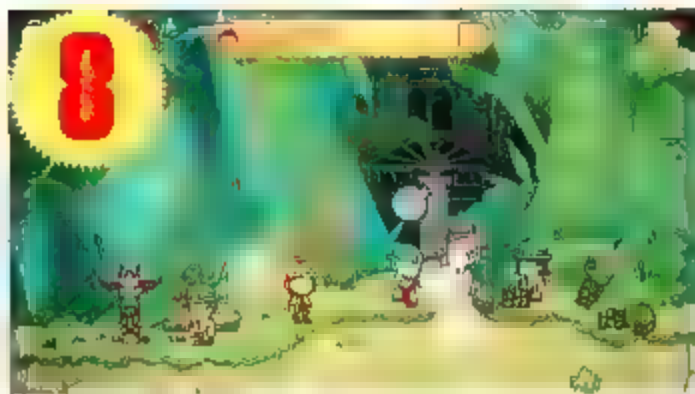


*WORKING TITLE

Scribblenauts Unlimited

PUBLISHER: WARNER BROS. INTERACTIVE ENTERTAINMENT DEVELOPER: 5TH CELL

LIKE PREVIOUS GAMES in the series, *Scribblenauts Unlimited* lets you conjure up pretty much anything that exists in the real world by using combinations of nouns and adjectives. But now you can also create things that don't exist in the real world. Want to drive a giant taco that has pizzas for wheels? Or fly around on a propeller-equipped yak? You can do so by combining objects to invent anything you want, then modify your creation's behavior in countless ways. Other highlights include larger levels and a multiplayer component. A version of the game is headed to the Nintendo 3DS handheld, as well. —CHRIS H



LEGO City: Undercover

PUBLISHER: NINTENDO DEVELOPER: TT GAMES

THIS WII U exclusive from the LEGO masters at TT Games melds the brand's tried-and-true gameplay formula with a lighthearted crime

not of and open-world structure. It also makes extensive use of the unique functionality of the Wii U GamePad. Your dispatcher issues

9

instructions through the controller's speaker, for example, and the touch screen pulls double duty as a convenient map of the city as well as an X-ray scanner to locate hidden suspects. In its early glimpse, LEGO City showcases a fantastic sense of humor highlighted by suave-yet-occasionally-hapless hero Chase McCain. —BRYAN T

Trine 2: Director's Cut

PUBLISHER: FROZENBYTE DEVELOPER: FROZENBYTE

UNLIKE THE OTHER Wii U games on this list, *Trine 2: Director's Cut* is scheduled to be a download-only title.

But that doesn't mean it's any less impressive: on the contrary, the graphics are amazing and the 2D gameplay is a blast. Taking control of Amadeus the Wizard, Zova the Thief, and Pontius the Knight, you'll switch between heroes to fight enemies and solve puzzles in an enchanting fantasy world. Though *Trine 2* has already been released on competing consoles, this version includes expanded content: more levels, new character abilities, enhanced controls, a four-player party mode, and more. —CHRIS H

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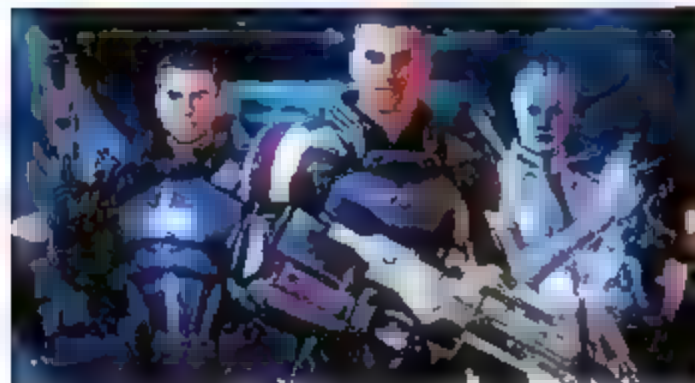


Also On the Way...

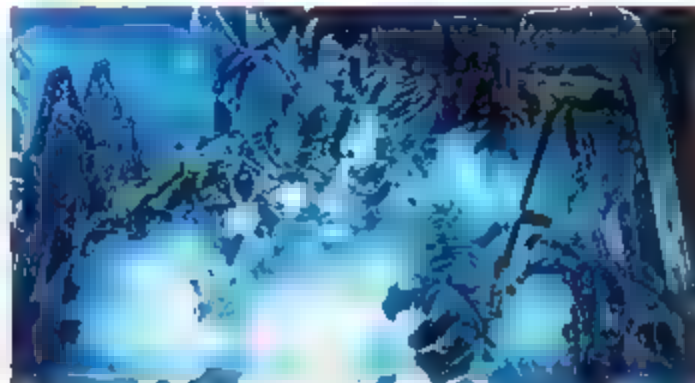


Nintendo Land

DESIGNED TO DEMONSTRATE the capabilities of the Wii U GamePad in a variety of ways, *Nintendo Land* is a virtual theme park with attractions inspired by your favorite Nintendo franchises, including *The Legend of Zelda*, *F-Zero*, *Luigi's Mansion*, *Donkey Kong*, and *Animal Crossing*. There will be 12 attractions in all, each featuring a different type of gameplay, and Nintendo representatives promise that each one will provide a surprisingly deep experience. We'll bring you more details about all of the attractions in upcoming issues.



Mass Effect 3



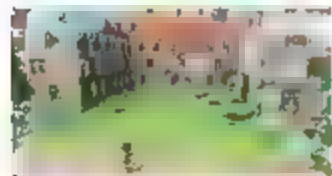
Darksiders II



Tank! Tank! Tank!



Tekken Tag Tournament 2*



Wii Fit U

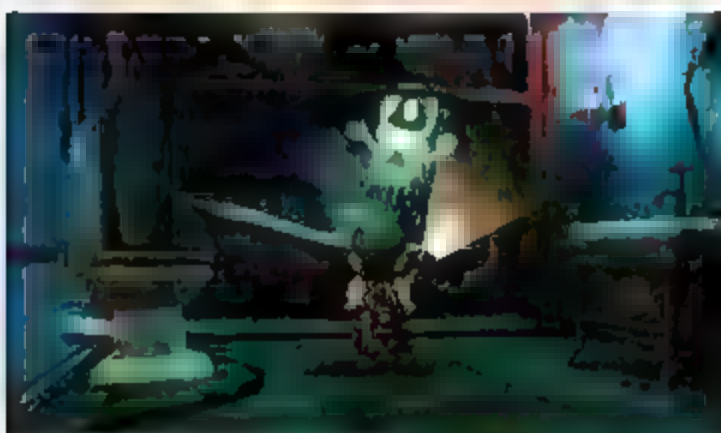
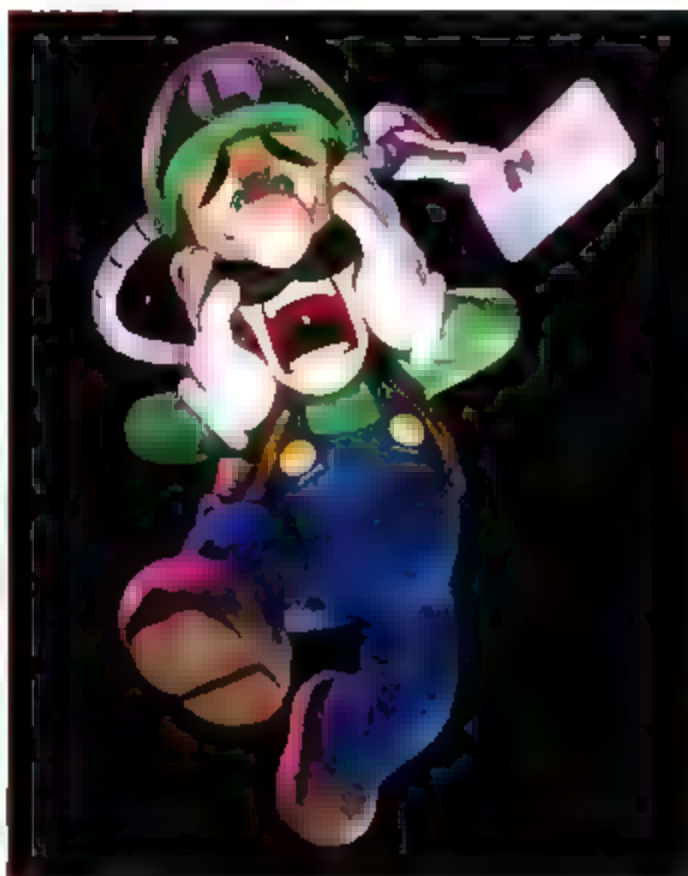


Ninja Gaiden 3: Razor's Edge



Game & Wario*

*WORKING TITLE



Good Moon Rising

Nintendo shines a light on the long-awaited Luigi's Mansion sequel for Nintendo 3DS.

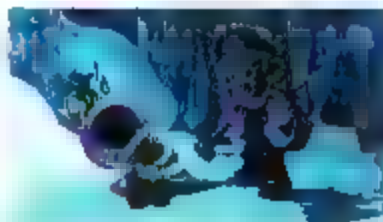
IT'S BEEN QUITE a while since the announcement of Luigi's Mansion 2 for the Nintendo 3DS handheld, but at long last there's some good news for fans of Mario's green garbed bro: The game finally has a release timeframe (this holiday season), as well as a new title—Luigi's Mansion: Dark Moon.

In his latest solo adventure, Luigi must venture into a variety of haunted locales to collect the pieces of an artifact known as the Dark

Moon. To do so, he'll have to battle loads of nefarious ghosts using his flashlight and his vacuumlike Poltergust 5000 (ghost-catching implement) and overcome an assortment of tricky puzzles.

In the first location Luigi visits, Ghostly Manor, you'll have to solve keys by blowing them from ceiling fans, dodge attacks from animated suits of armor, discover treasure chests hidden behind tapestries, and learn to activate machinery using

Luigi's new Siroboscope attachment. There's even a showdown in the bathroom with a showering ghost. Things get all the more varied when



you visit other haunted locales, which include the Old Clockworks (a sandy abandoned factory where you'll have to yank pulleys, solve clock-based puzzles, and battle phantoms that hide underground) and the Secret Lab (an icy chalet that comes complete with an undead bearskin rug and a haunted hockey rink).

New play mechanics—such as wielding a flashlight that stuns ghosts and a rainbow beam that reveals secrets— and humorously detailed animations also await any gamers brave enough to follow Luigi into the creepy abodes. **CHRIS H.**

A WINNER IS...
Nintendo games with
high-definition graphics.



DODONGO DISLIKES...
Boneheads who compare
ZombiU to Red Steel.

Blocky Bagbins

Build your faux-plastic fantasy in LEGO The Lord of the Rings: The Video Game

Just as we were coming to grips with a pair of Harry Potter games, the LEGO series turns its attention to that other huge fantasy film series with LEGO The Lord of the Rings: The Video Game. Same for Wii, Xbox, and PS. More than 80 characters are playable, and the game looks and plays like past LEGO action entries, albeit with a more thrilling shadowbox, and iconic Middle-earth settings. The fantastical hobbits will be a welcome addition to the LEGO universe.



STAR
POWERA closer look at the
characters we love

Link

He's heroic. He's courageous. When there's a realm to be saved and a princess to be rescued, Link is the guy for the job.

CAREER GRAPH



After saving Hyrule from Ganondorf, Link returns to the Triforce, and rescues Princess Zelda from her prison.



Link goes to the Temple of Time to retrieve the Master Sword.



Link returns to the Temple of Time after stabbing Ganondorf right in the head.



Link returns to the Temple of Time and helps the people of Skyloft to reclaim the world below.



Link returns to the Temple of Time after stabbing Ganondorf right in the head.

Link returns to the Temple of Time after stabbing Ganondorf right in the head.



Link returns to the Temple of Time after stabbing Ganondorf right in the head.



OUR FAVORITE LINK GAMES



The Legend of Zelda: Link to the Past
NINTENDO SNES, 1991

Out of all of the 2D Legend of Zelda games, Link to the Past is our favorite. This title provided a much richer Hyrule for Link to explore, complete with a compelling narrative, cool new items (such as the Hookshot), and the ever-popular light and dark worlds.



The Legend of Zelda: The Wind Waker
NINTENDO GBA, 2002

Games don't get much more charming than The Wind Waker. But don't be fooled; beneath the cute cel-shaded veneer, the Wind Waker has some of the most engrossing gameplay in the Zelda series. This time around, Link's adventure begins when his sister gets kidnapped.



The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time
NINTENDO 64, 1998

The original Ocarina of Time on Nintendo 64 redefined the Zelda series and taught the world what a modern adventure game should be. The version for the Nintendo Game Boy Advance is even better. While retaining the same great gameplay and story, it adds enhanced graphics, better controls, and new modes.



The Legend of Zelda: Skyward Sword
NINTENDO Wii, 2009

Despite being as silent as ever, Link was an abundance of personality in Skyward Sword. The game lets players learn about his school, his friends, and, most importantly, his relationship with Zelda. The game also benefits from a terrific story, outstanding visuals, and immersive new controls.

"Come on!"

THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: THE WIND WAKER

Link's pointy, anime ears are due to his Hylian heritage. Young-adult versions of Link are known to wear earrings!

Link sometimes wears tunics of other hues, usually indicating magical properties. Our only question: Where are the pockets? They must be pretty deep to conceal all the items that he carries.

In most of his adventures Link is left-handed. In recent games, however, Link has been a righty. The mark of the Triforce of Courage can sometimes be seen on his right hand.

Link is never far from his blade. The Master Sword is usually Link's most trusted weapon, but when it isn't available, lesser swords will do.

LINK'S OTHER LOOK



Though Link has sported a number of styles over the years, a lot of players just weren't ready for the highly cartoony Link that debuted in the Legend of Zelda: The Wind Waker.

After growing accustomed to the more-traditional character design from Ocarina of Time, many fans were whipped into a frenzied rage by the big-headed, stubby-limbed version of Hyrule's hero. Fortunately,

the game was a success, and the new Link design became a fan favorite. The Wind Waker Link is a more mature, more confident version of the hero we know and love.

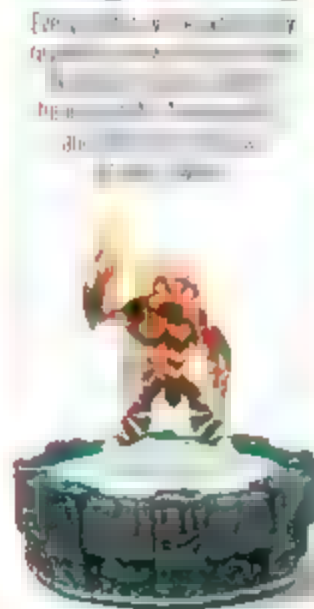
Zelda universe

Link's design is a blend of traditional and modern, making him a timeless hero.

Link's design is a blend of traditional and modern, making him a timeless hero.

NEW
SKYLANDER!

Bring the Sting



Swarm

Element:

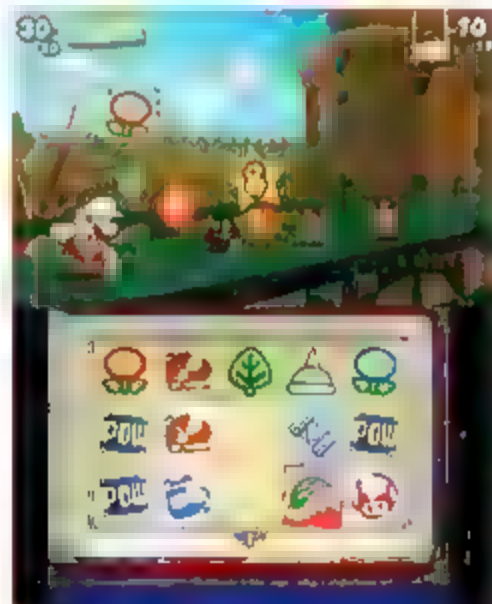
Bio:

Now with More Attitude

Relive a revolutionary era with **WWE '13** for Wii.

AN UPDATED CHARACTER

Over loads of hard hitting moves, enhanced visuals, fresh storylines. Those are the things players expect when THQ unveils each installment of its popular WWE video game franchise. But **WWE '13** for Wii brings something else to the table: an emphasis on WWE's beloved "Attitude Era" of the late 1990s. Stars from that period, such as Stone Cold Steve Austin, The Undertaker, and Mankind, feature heavily, and a campaign mode focuses on those performers, as well. The game also includes plenty of current-day WWE personalities it should be the series's largest roster yet, with whom you can perform new jaw-dropping stunts, such as driving your opponent through a barricade or causing the ring to collapse. **WWE '13** is scheduled for a late October release. —CHRIS H.



Stick It to the Man

Stickers are both the means and the end in the Nintendo 3DS handheld's **Paper Mario: Sticker Star**.

THE GAME LONG known as Paper Mario emerged at E3 with the new title of Paper Mario: Sticker Star, and a serious focus on stickers. In the game, Mario can peel digital stickers off of game environments, win them from foes, and earn them in quests. In combat, players can use their collected stickers to trigger special attacks, while in field areas they can be used to change the in-game environment, giving Mario new ways to complete quests and make paths to proceed. **Paper Mario: Sticker Star** will be available this holiday season, both as a traditional Game Card release and as a download from the Nintendo eShop. —CASEY L.

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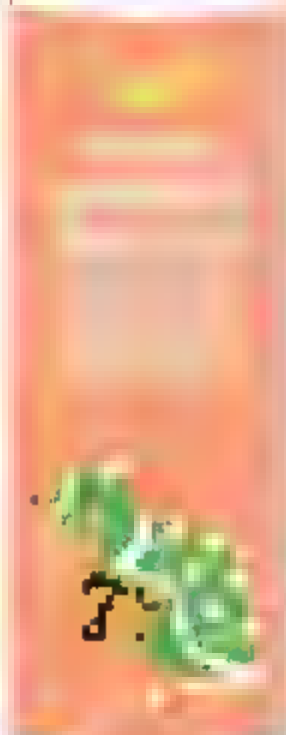
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POWER QUIZ



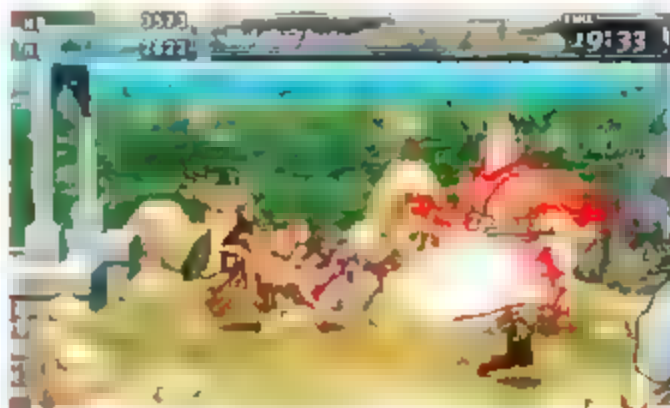
Deciphering the Code

Atlus's odd-zing quirky beat-'em-up **Code of Princess** for the Nintendo 3DS handheld

CODE OF PRINCESS is a spiritual follow-up to the classic Sega Saturn action game *Guardian Heroes*, as headed to North American N3DS systems this fall courtesy of Atlus. Developed by key *Guardian Heroes* creators, *Code of Princess* shares

a great deal with its predecessor including a similar discursive art style, an experience-point-based character upgrade system, and a combat engine that has players unleashing fighting-game-style moves on a 2D battlefield divided

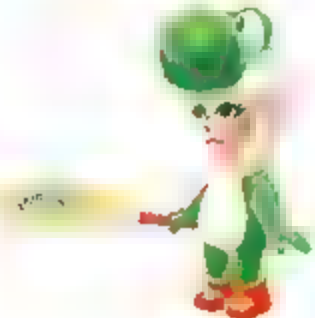
into three parallel layers. The cast and world of *Code of Princess* are based on a series of figures and illustrations created by Kikuo Nishimura, the former Capcom artist who more recently designed the cast of Aksys's *Nine Hours, Nine Persons, Nine Doors*. Her original vision for *Code of Princess* was for a sexy girl-filled RPG, so expect to see plenty of ladies in the game's cast and plenty of skin on the game's cover art. —CABBY L



Hidden Pros

Expand your **Mario Tennis Open** roster with these QR codes

DO YOU ENJOY *Mario Tennis Open*, but feel as though there aren't enough adorable creatures for you to play as? Well, buddy, you came to the right place. Scan these QR codes into your copy of the game, go to MarioTennisOpen.nintendo.com for step-by-step instructions, and your matches will instantly become more yoshi-fun. Not only will you unlock a green Yoshi outfit for your Mario avatar, but there's also a Nintendo Power-exclusive White Yoshi to control. —PHIL T



WARP ZONE

What we were writing about way back when

5

YEARS AGO



The suave yet terrifying Albert Wesker was the cover model for Nintendo Power vol. 217, which celebrated the arrival of Resident Evil: The Umbrella Chronicles and Resident Evil 4 on the Wii console. The issue contained loads of other Wii coverage too, including looks at Mario Party 8, Pokémon Battle Revolution, and Zack & Wiki: Quest for Barbaros' Treasure (back when it was known as Project Treasure Island 2). Space Station Tycoon was featured, as well, but Namco Bandai later canceled the game.

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YEARS AGO

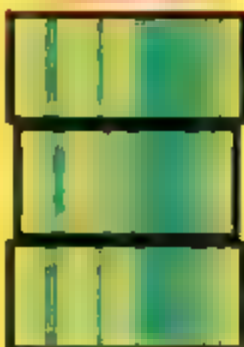


With coverage of the 2002 E3 show comprising a big part of the issue, the July 2002 Nintendo Power was practically bursting at the seams with exciting gaming news. Super Mario Sunshine, The Legend of Zelda: The Wind Waker, Metroid Prime, World of Warcraft, and Mario Party 4 were just a few of the exciting titles on display. Uwayne "The Rock" Johnson was also featured prominently, as he appeared in not one but two GameCube games: WWE WrestleMania X8 and The Scorpion King: Rise of the Akkadian.

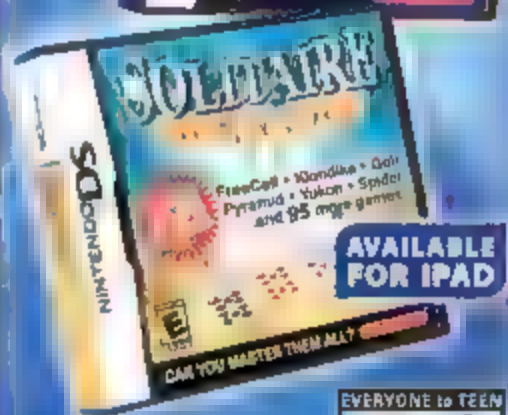


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YEARS AGO



July 1992 marked one of the most glorious events in the history of gaming: the Super NES release of Street Fighter. The World Warriors' Likert's comic counterpart, this Super NES fighting game pretty much had it all: from precise controls to diverse characters to an amazing soundtrack. It's hard to explain what a momentous occasion this was back in the day, or how astounding it was to play such an impressive port of such a popular arcade game from the comfort of your own home. It eventually sold more than 6 million units.



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COLLECTOR'S CORNER

SERIOUSLY COOL STUFF FOR SERIOUS NINTENDO FANS

CHx with Kicks

The HeroCHx collectible-figurine game recently branched out into the world of Capcom's Street Fighter. All of your favorite World Warriors are represented, from Ryu, Guile, Chun-Li, and Cammy to Balrog, Sagat, Vega, and Akuma. They're available in sets and single-figure booster packs.



Galactic Buds

Relive Mario's interstellar adventures with these Super Mario Galaxy 2 mini-figurine two-packs from Banpresto. Three sets are available: Bee Mario with Bee Mushroom, Spring Mario with Spring Mushroom, and Bee Luigi with Star Bunny.



Conquering Hero

Producer Hisashi Koinuma reveals the secrets behind **Pokémon Conquest**.

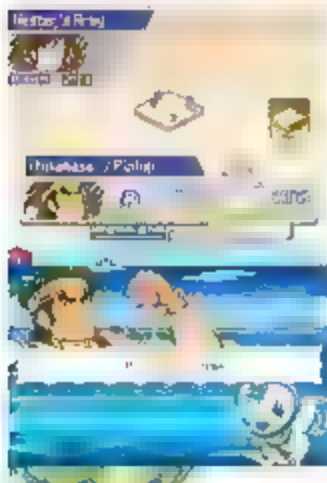
Mixing the light-hearted world of Pokémon with the story-laden world of Nobunaga's Ambition seemed like the oddest combination since peaches and peanut butter, but still, somehow, the two game concepts fit great together. We wanted to find out more about the creation of this unique strategy title, so we went right to the source—producer Hisashi Koinuma of Tecmo Koei.

NINTENDO POWER What about Pokémon and Nobunaga's Ambition make them a good fit for each other?

HISASHI KOINUMA It was actually [a decision made] between The Pokémon Company's president, Mr. [Tsunekazu] Ishihara—basically the founder of the Pokémon series—and Tecmo Koei's president, Mr. [Yoichi] Erakawa, who is the founder of the Nobunaga series. There was a lot of discussion between the two of them to get the two series together. There are similarities in that there are 17 different types of Pokémon, and also 17 different regions to take over in the original Nobunaga's Ambition simulation series. So there are a few common elements in those areas.

Why is Eevee the Pokémon that you start with?

In Pokémon Conquest the Trainer, or in this case Warlord, chooses a partner, and with Eevee—because Eevee can evolve into many different types—the Pokémon is a bit of an extension of the player. We saw it as an excellent fit for the series.



In general, how did you determine which Pokémon would be included in the game?

In terms of the characters that are in Pokémon Conquest, the visual styles of the characters are from the Tecmo Koei series Samurai Warriors. Based on the fact that these characters will have a link with certain Pokémon, we took a look at what kind of Pokémon would be a good fit for them from a visual standpoint—especially since one of the key themes of the game is the link between the characters and their Pokémon. That bond between the two is very important, so we used that as a basis to decide which Pokémon would be in the game.

Do you have a favorite Warlord/Pokémon pairing?

From a visual standpoint, I like the combination of Gracia and Munna. But I also like the combination of Yukimura and Tepig, since Yukimura's armor is red and it gives the image of fire.

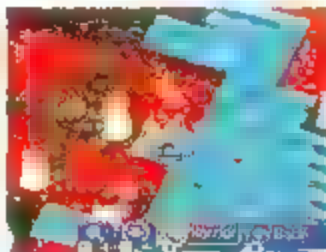
What challenges did you face combining the fairly realistic world of Nobunaga's Ambition and the mostly fantasy world of Pokémon?

Specifically because the samurai period is a lot more realistic, we decided to set the game in a fantasy world, so it's a little bit more fitting for the two. Once we established the world, we added elements from the Nobunaga side as well as the

Pokémon side. But it was also a key point to keep a type of Pokémon strategy in mind to be successful in creating this game. We were able to find ways to combine the two.

The player has never been able to evolve in previous Pokémon games, so what was the inspiration for including Warlord evolution in this game?

Usually in the Pokémon games it's the Pokémon that are the main characters and not so much the Trainer—it's about the Pokémon getting stronger and evolving throughout the game. But in this game, it seemed like a bit of an odd balance if only the Pokémon evolve and nothing happens with the Warlords, so we thought that maybe we should get them to evolve as well since they're working together. We actually discussed this with The Pokémon Company, and they said that they would definitely be interested in having both Pokémon and the Warlords evolve. It's not just about the strength of the Pokémon evolving and getting stronger until the story



finishes. It's really about both the Pokémon and the Warriors; it's a combination. The story is made of both, so we wanted to make sure that these elements were in both characters.

What was the collaborative process like between Tecmo Koei, The Pokémon Company, and Nintendo?

In terms of planning the artwork and design, it was largely done by Tecmo Koei. But in terms of the actual design document, that was where The Pokémon Company strongly cooperated. When it came to testing and balancing, Nintendo's, Mario Club was also included, and all three companies ended up being involved in that process as well.

Were you planning on releasing Pokémon Conquest in North America from the beginning?

When we were first developing, we felt that it would be nice if it could be released in North America, so on purpose we made sure that the worlds were fantasy worlds and not actual Japanese places. And then we were approached to release it in North America, which we were very happy about.

Are there any interesting stories you can tell about things that happened during the development process that no one really knows about yet?

The game did come out on DS, so of course we were considering the DS as a platform. But with Tecmo Koei we do make a lot of PC games as well, so for the first couple of months, we [Tecmo Koei] were actually considering developing it as a PC game. But before we even were trying to implement it on PCs, we cut out a bunch of paper and tried to develop the game as a board game. [Laughs]



GAME FORECAST

READERS' MOST WANTED

Vote for your favorites at
www.nintendopower.com/polls



- 1 Paper Mario: Sticker Star
- 2 Luigi's Mansion: Dark Moon
- 3 New Super Mario Bros. 2
- 4 Animal Crossing*
- 5 Kingdom Hearts 3D: Dream Drop Distance

Wii



- 1 Kirby's Dream Collection: Special Edition
- 2 The Last Story
- 3 Disney Epic Mickey 2: The Power of Two
- 4 Skylanders Giants
- 5 Young Justice: Legacy



- 1 Rayman Legends
- 2 Batman: Arkham City—Armored Edition
- 3 Assassin's Creed III
- 4 LEGO City: Undercover
- 5 Darksiders II

NINTENDO 3DS

50 Classic Games	Maximum	Q1/12
Adventure Time: Ray of Ice King! Why'd You Steal Our Garbage?*	DS	FALL 12
Angler's Club: Ultimate Bass Fishing 3D	DS	2012
Animal Crossing*	Nintendo	TBA
Ben 10: Omniverse	DS	FALL 12
Banisher: Dark-RL 3D	Game	TBA
Candlevania: Lords of Shadow—Mirror of Fate	Konami	FALL 12
Castlevania: Lords of Shadow—Mirror of Fate	Konami	FALL 12
Castlevania: Lords of Shadow—Mirror of Fate	Konami	FALL 12

Classic Games Overload: Card and Puzzle Edition	Ellegames	1/12
Cube of Princess	Atari	FALL 12
Cyber*™	Konami	TBA
Disney Epic Mickey: Power of Illusion	Disney	FALL 12
Disney Epic Mickey: Power of Illusion	Disney	Q1/12

Disney Epic Mickey: Power of Illusion	Disney	Q1/12
Disney Princess: My Fairytale Adventure	Disney	Q1/12
Disney Princess: My Fairytale Adventure	Disney	Q1/12
Disney Princess: My Fairytale Adventure	Disney	Q1/12
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Disney Princess: My Fairytale Adventure	Disney	Q1/12
Disney Princess: My Fairytale Adventure	Disney	Q1/12

Rabbids Rumble	Ubisoft	1/12
Rise of the Guardians: The Video Game	DS	1/12
ScrabbleQuest Unlimited	Warner Bros.	FALL 12
Skylanders Giants	Activision	FALL 12
Sonic & All-Stars Racing Transformed	Sega	FALL 12
Spy Hunter	Warner Bros.	FALL 12
Super Black Bass	Rising Star	Q1/12
Super Smash Bros.*	Nintendo	TBA
Transformers: Prime—The Game	Activision	10/12
Virtue's Last Reward	Anays	FALL 12
Word Wizard 3D	Storm City	Q1/12

NINTENDO DS

Ben 10: Omniverse	DS	FALL 12
Big Time Rush	GameMill	1/12
Deer Drive: Legends	Maximum	Q1/12
Disney Epic Mickey 2: The Power of Two	Disney	1/12
Disney Princess: My Fairytale Adventure	Disney	Q1/12
Harley Pastorek's Hollywood Workout	Madson	10/12
Spy Game Pack	Academy	Q1/12
Just Dance 4	Ubisoft	10/12
Just Dance Disney Party	Ubisoft	10/12
Karaoke Jigsaw	Konami	2012
Kirby's Dream Collection: Special Edition	Nintendo	Q1/12
The Last Story	Xseed	Q1/12
LEGO The Lord of the Rings	Warner Bros.	FALL 12
Mama's 2-Pack	Mayesco	Q1/12
NBA 2K13	2K Sports	10/12
Nickelodeon Dance 2	2K Play	10/12
Rise of the Guardians: The Video Game	DS	10/12
Skylanders Giants	Activision	FALL 12
Transformers: Prime—The Game	Activision	10/12
Y-chronicles: Taking the Lead	DS	FALL 12
WWF 13	10/12	10/12
Young Justice: Legacy	Little Orbit	2012
Zumba Fitness Core	Mayesco	10/12

Ben 10: Omniverse	DS	FALL 12
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Dance & Warner*	Nintendo	2012
Injustice: Gods Among Us	Warner Bros.	TBA
Jeff Tardis	Maximum	10/12
Just Dance 4	Ubisoft	10/12
LEGO City: Undercover	Nintendo	10/12
Marvel's Avengers: Battle for Earth	Ubisoft	10/12
Mass Effect 3	Electronic Arts	10/12
NBA 2K13	2K Sports	10/12
New Super Mario Bros. U	Nintendo	10/12
Ninja Golden 3: Razor's Edge	Nintendo	10/12
Nintendo Land	Nintendo	10/12
Palm 3	Nintendo	10/12
Project P-10B*	Nintendo	2012
Rabbids Rumble	Ubisoft	10/12
Rayman Legends	Ubisoft	TBA
Rise of the Guardians: The Video Game	DS	10/12
ScrabbleQuest Unlimited	Warner Bros.	10/12
Sonic & All-Stars Racing Transformed	Sega	10/12
Sports Connection	Ubisoft	10/12
Super Smash Bros.*	Nintendo	TBA
Tekken Tag Tournament 2*	Namco	10/12
Tekken Tag Tournament 2*	Namco	10/12
Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon Online	Ubisoft	TBA
Wii Fit U	Nintendo	2012
Wii Fit Panoramic View*	Nintendo	10/12
Your Shape: Fitness Revolution 3D	Ubisoft	10/12
ZombiU	Ubisoft	10/12

NINTENDO DS

Adventure Time: Ray of Ice King! Why'd You Steal Our Garbage?*	DS	FALL 12
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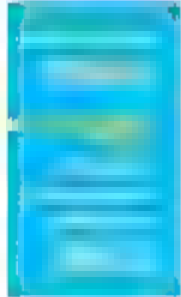
IN THIS SECTION

▶ **INTRO TO SUPERMARIO POWERUP**
Mighty Switch Force HD

NINTENDO 3DS
ZOMBIE GAD PREVIEW
Brachiosaur Hunter

WUTHERS COUNTRY
PLAYERS
Review

LEGO CITY
LEGO City: The Movie
Review



A New Definition of Force

WayForward's *Mighty Switch Force!* is reborn in high definition on Wii U.

BOASTING SUPERB 2D GRAPHICS, compelling gameplay, and a unique mix of puzzles and action, *Mighty Switch Force!* is one of the most exciting titles to have hit the Nintendo eShop. But as it turns out, futuristic police officer Patricia Wagon's mission to bring the Hooligan Sisters to

justice has only just begun. The game is being redrawn and rebuilt as one of the first downloadable titles for the Wii U console while retaining the same stage designs and innovative background-shifting play mechanics of the original version. *Mighty Switch Force! HD* will look

better than ever thanks to extraordinarily detailed hand-crafted visuals. (And if you don't believe it, just take a look at the character art comparisons shown on the next page.) Here to provide further details on *Mighty Switch Force! HD* is WayForward creative director Matt Bozon. —CHRIS H

Q: AUP #2 First, the obvious question—why bring Mighty Switch Force! to Wii U?

A: JFW We've really enjoyed developing for Nintendo's download services and really want to be there for the Wii U launch. While we do have some brand-new games in the planning phase, remaking Mighty Switch Force! in HD lets us experiment on the new hardware. To transform our beloved pixels into traditional character animation—similar to our *A Boy and His Blob* remake—we've gone back to the original artists to create new, more illustrative versions of Patricia Wagon and company. The results look more like the promotional artwork, which is a very cool alternative to pixel art. But pixel lovers don't need to fret: WayForward has plenty more pixel-based games on the way too!

Will this be the updated version with the new levels and the quick retry? Will there be any other new features added?
Yes, the recently released "Bonus Incidents" and retry option from the N3DS version will be included in the Wii U version. We're having a tough time putting our pencils down, so we may end up adding even more features before we're done. I guess we'll have to wait and see what's possible before launch!

A big part of the appeal was the 3D background/foreground effects; what are your thoughts on those not being present in the HD version?

I'm a nut for stereoscopic 3D, so I do miss it a bit. But the new animation and visuals add so much to the game that it's hard to

imagine Switch Force without them.

How will the unique functions of the controller be used?

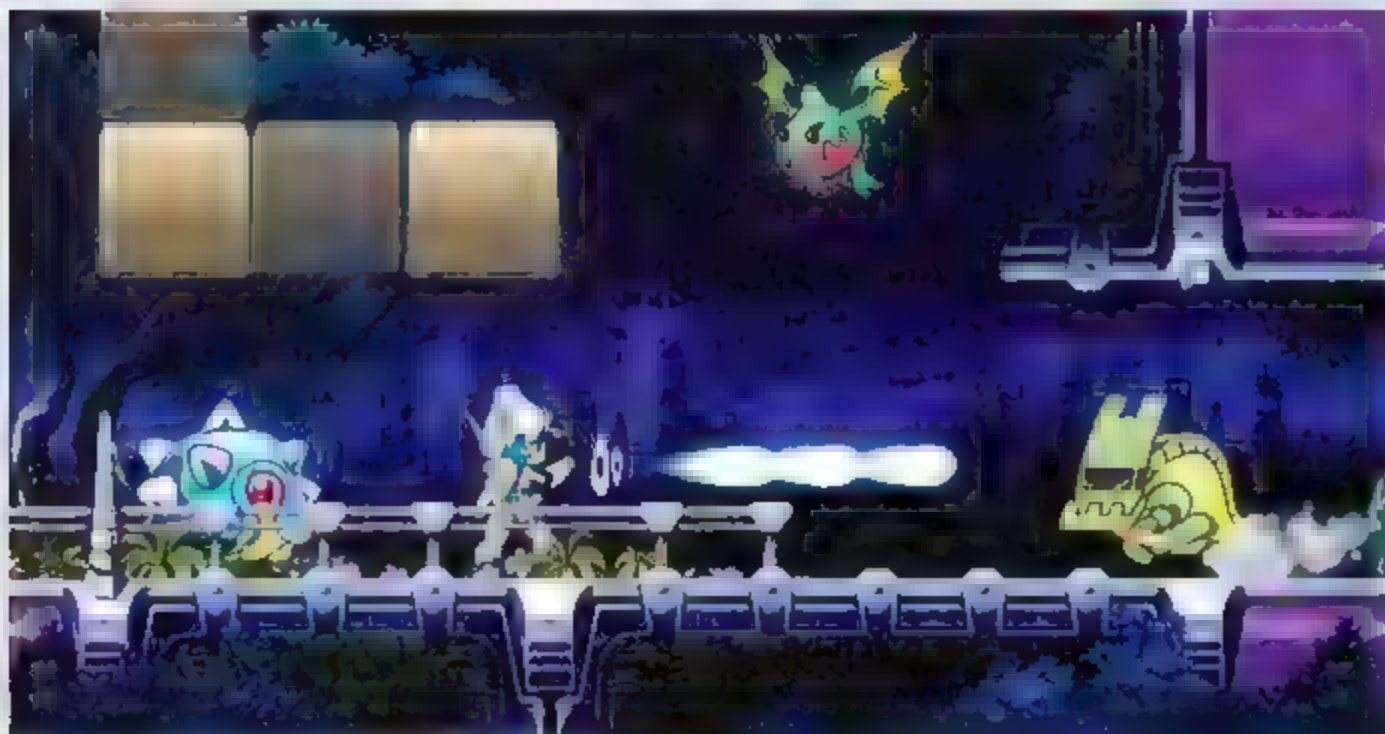
The controller's touch screen displays your Hooligan Tracker just like on the N3DS. When roaming without a TV, a smaller onscreen compass points the way. While this is admittedly not a groundbreaking use of the second screen, it does give the player a few very handy options.

Can you explain what the process was like bringing the game from the Nintendo 3DS handheld to Wii U?

The game engine is very portable and the Wii U hardware is more than capable of running a 2D action puzzler at blazing speeds. So most of the challenges have been about presentation. Some puzzles had to be rethought in order to match the wider screen dimensions. We're also working extra hard to keep the game's visual integrity intact while switching pixel art to traditional cel animation. With many pixel games going HD lately, we've seen our share of lifeless "faceovers." We don't want the game to feel like a port. It's the same game but a new experience.

What are your thoughts on future Wii U downloadable releases from WayForward?

Mighty Switch Force! HD is something of a warmup to help find our groove. In the meantime we've been cooking up even more downloadable surprises for both Wii U and N3DS. We'll definitely have more news down the line.





Girls' Night Out

Three heroines band together in Nintendo eShop RPG *Unchained Blades*.

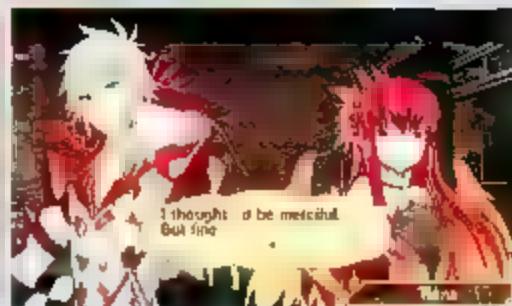
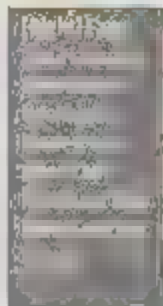
IN VOL. 277 we gave you a comprehensive overview of Xseed's upcoming dungeon-crawling RPG *Unchained Blades*. Since then we've delved deeper into its fantasy world of magic and monster people, and the further we explore this anime-inspired title for the Nintendo 3DS handheld, the more excited we become.

After playing Chapter 1, as the once-powerful dragon-born Fang, you move on to a chapter focused on the young lass Tiana. A fire-wielding melee type, Tiana is a princess of the warring Phoenix Clan. To convince her father to let her leave home, she dupes him into thinking that she's headed to Goddess Clunea to wish for peace for her kingdom. (The goddess will grant anyone a single wish, but only if they pass a Holy Ordeal, which means surviving one of the four towering labyrinths known

as Titans.) In reality, however, Tiana's biggest desire is to become a dragon, which she reiterates during an animated cut-scene at the beginning of this chapter.

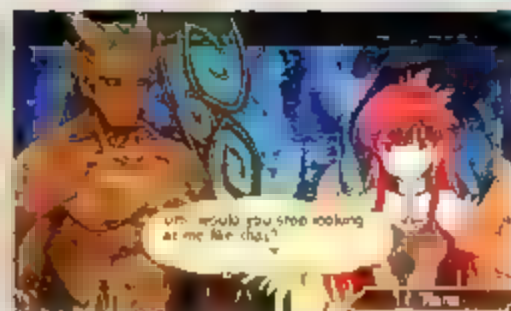
Tiana's quest begins after her completion of the Temple of Trials, which is a short test that all seekers of Goddess Clunea must endure before embarking on their journey. Tiana quickly encounters two other wish-pilgrims—Sylvie, a demonically dressed magic user of the Reaper Clan, and Niko, a nine-tailed ranger from the Spirit Fox Clan. Since the three ladies finish the Temple of Trials simultaneously, they agree that there was a reason they met, and that it would be much more fun to travel together.

We first see Sylvie before the trio joins forces: in the prologue she's shown tending to her ill brother. Finally, she serves as



the mother figure of the group, constantly reminding the other girls to behave in a ladylike manner. But despite Sylvie's nurturing nature, her magic skills are a force to be reckoned with. Although all three maidens are casters, Sylvie can use lightning, fire, frost, and wind-element attacks, as well as dark magic that will haunt enemies even after she's fallen in battle. Neko also packs a punch: the wind magic and a cheery skis prove useful in a pinch. Her tomboyish personality is nothing like Sylvie's, however, which leads to some humorous exchanges between the two. Neko's wish is to be smart, and perhaps rightfully so—you'll see her doing things like "marking her territory," activating obvious traps, and generally being downright ditz.

During the girls' stay at the town's inn, Tiana overhears Huadli, a member of the Drvad Clan, talking with his son, who's about getting their wish granted. Unsure of where to find a Titan, Tiana convinces the group to follow the father and son, and they soon arrive at Titan Tortuga, a massive labyrinth set on a peninsula. Huadli and his bump into the trio throughout the dungeon, where



the polite Huadli reveals his wish to save his village. But since only one wish may be granted per Titan, Tiana is hearing none of it. Instead, Tiana is hearing none of it. Instead, Tiana is hearing none of it. Instead, Tiana is hearing none of it.

covered in lava like they were in Darius. The Titan Floor Chapter 1 Tortuga's walls are lined with ice crystals. The Titans' frozen confines are filled with water, and frost-type enemies, so Sylvie's lightning magic really comes in handy here. Additionally, Tortuga introduces a

new dungeon mechanic: flooded floors. In some areas, each step causes the water level to rise, and after 40 paces, the party drowns, leaving the area reset to the step counter, but the flooding adds an interesting degree of strategy and suspense to reaching the next floor.

Of course we're just skimming the surface here. The game has a ton of content, including epic turn-based battles, baffling amounts of exploration, deep character development, a slew of side quests, and even some inebriated shenanigans. With more than seven chapters promising at least 50 hours of immersive gameplay, we're certain *Unchained Blades* will keep you chained up for quite a while once it hits the Nintendo eShop.

CODY M.





Released from the Bottle

WayForward's classic Game Boy Color title **Shantae** is (finally) coming to the Nintendo 3DS Virtual Console.

SHANTAE WAS A victim of bad timing. When Capcom released the WayForward-developed title for the Game Boy Color in 2002, the Game Boy Advance had already been on store shelves for a year. Perhaps in recognition of this, no many copies were manufactured (rumors suggest about 20,000 exist), and despite positive reviews by both fans and critics, Shantae simply never reached a wide audience.

It wasn't until eight years later that WayForward was able to publish a sequel—*Shantae: Risky's Revenge*—as DSiWare. This game once again thrust Shantae into the limelight, much to the pleasure

of her legion of devotees. Despite that title's success, there was still a large demand for a rerelease of the original *Shantae*. After all, with so few copies out there (and selling for well over \$100 on online auction sites), many people haven't had an opportunity to play it. Fortunately, game fans will finally get their chance now that the game is headed to Virtual Console through the Nintendo eShop.

For those late to the party, here's the story: Shantae, the titular half-genie, is designated as the guardian of Swirlie Town, which has come under attack by the female pirate Risky Boots. Risky has stolen an experimental steam

engine, and Shantae must stop her before she uses the device for evil. Shantae takes on Risky's minions by attacking with her pottytail. As the game progresses, she is able to transform into various animals by dancing. These forms, such as a wall-climbing monkey and a rock-busting elephant, allow her to perform additional techniques and reach new areas.

Occasionally you'll come across a town to explore, and the view changes from standard side-scrolling to over Shantae's shoulder. In these towns, you can talk to passersby for clues and visit shops to buy items, restore your health, play minigames, and more.

Along the way, Shantae encounters friends like the not-terribly-smart Bolo and the surprisingly adorable zombie Rufflytops. There is a great sense of fun throughout the game, and the characters' humorous dialogue reinforces that. Comedy aside, the game is notable for its expertly drawn character sprites and their fantastic animation. It's easily one of the best-looking Game Boy Color titles out there, so it's good news that more people will finally get to see it in action. *Shantae* is scheduled to arrive on N3DS Virtual Console later this year. **PHILIP**

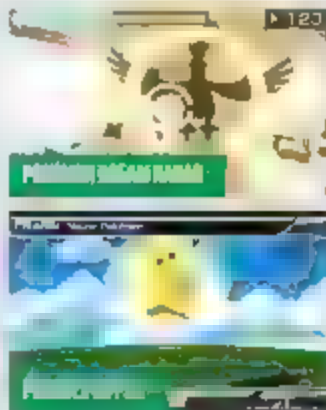
Catch of the Day

Catch and study the denizens of **Pokemon Black Version 2** and **White Version 2** with a pair of new Nintendo 3DS peripherals.

PLANNING TO PLAY the *Pokemon Black Version 2* or *White Version 2* games on a Nintendo 3DS? If so, you can get some special support from the *Pokemon Dream Radar* game and the *Pokedex 3D Pro* application, a pair of N3DS-exclusive downloads that will be available for purchase this fall.

Pokemon Dream Radar is an augmented-reality game that allows players to find *Pokemon* hiding in real-world environments, catch them, and transfer them into the saved files of their *Pokemon Black Version 2* and *White Version 2* games. *Pokedex 3D Pro* is an

upgraded and updated version of the existing *Pokedex 3D* title, featuring detailed information on the 640-plus *Pokemon* in the series. It too offers augmented-reality features, such as the ability for users to take photos of themselves with *Pokemon*. **CASEY L.**



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EVALUATION STATION

 ALL DOWN DRO
 SOFTWARE FOR DOWN DRO
 INTERVIEW FOR DOWN DRO

DOWN DRO



ART OF BALANCE TOUCH!

PUBLISHER: BAIN-LO MULTIMEDIA | GENRE: PUZZLE | PRICE: \$4.99

Well-appreciated WiiWare title *Art of Balance* makes its way to NDS with additional content and improved stylus control. (The 3D effect isn't shabby here, either.) The game presents players with a series of shapes that must be stacked with sufficient stability to endure a three-second count. The beauty of this physics-based challenge lies principally in its open-ended nature; each level can be solved via countless configurations (it's even possible to win with a crumbling stack, provided no piece completes its descent during the count). Spectacular production values, plenty of content, and a deep respect for what makes puzzle games work (i.e., evolving challenges that keep players engaged) cumulate to make this one of the best puzzlers available. —PATRICK C.

Recommended

DOWN DRO



BIRD MANIA 3D

PUBLISHER: DEVON
GENRE: ACTION
PRICE: \$1.99

Bird Mania 3D is fairly straightforward—it's an autoscrolling title in which you direct your feathered friend to collect stars, dash through enemies, and avoid obstacles. The entire game consists of a single endless level that speeds up the farther you fly, and your goal is to accumulate as many points as possible before crash-landing. It's fun in short spurts, the aesthetics are pleasing, and the music is decent, but the game is just too barebones and repetitive to recommend. —CODY M.

CODY M.

DOWN DRO



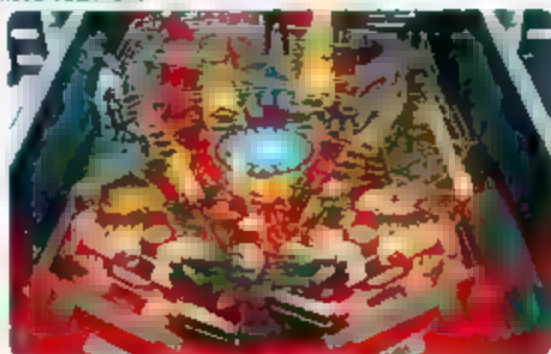
BOMB MONKEY

PUBLISHER: BOMBMONKEY | GENRE: PUZZLE | PRICE: FREE

As puzzle games go, *Bomb Monkey* is fairly basic. You toss colored blocks into a pit to form like-colored groups, then use bombs to wipe out those groups. Plan accordingly, and you can form chains that will clear dozens of blocks with one bomb. On its own, the gameplay is competent, if not terribly exciting (although it's more fun when played against a friend). However, the simple premise is given a bit of variety thanks to a few different gameplay modes. The best of them is *Rescue*, where you're tasked with using multiple bombs to blast open a cage while also using them to clear out the ever-rising blocks. Then there's *Numbers*, where you must destroy numbered spheres in the proper order while contending with the standard blocks. These modes add a welcome sense of urgency that is mostly missing in the "normal" game. —PHIL T.

2

DOWN DRO



MARVEL PINBALL 3D

PUBLISHER: ZEN STUDIOS | GENRE: PINBALL | PRICE: \$1.99

Created by the company behind *Zen Pinball 3D*, *Marvel Pinball 3D* shares its predecessor's penchant for skewing the realities of pinball. The tables here sport features such as animated characters and special effects that simply wouldn't work on an actual pinball table. The action is also a bit faster-paced than the real deal. That's not to say it doesn't present an authentic game of pinball. On the contrary, the ball physics are outstanding, and the flippers provide a suitable kick. Think of it as a "video game" version of pinball as opposed to a simulation. The four tables included in this

collection—each one based on a different Marvel comic (*Iron Man*, *Captain America*, the *Fantastic Four*, and *Blade*)—are all well designed, and they play quite differently thanks to their varied goals. In fact, each table encourages you to meet these goals with a system that rewards you for accomplishing specific tasks. There is also a well-implemented leaderboard that constantly updates you on others' scores, promoting fierce competition. Some of the voice samples grow repetitive after you've heard them for the 20th time, but you'll probably be too distracted by the impressive 3D effect to notice. —PHIL T.

Recommended

DOWN DRO



ORDER UP!!

PUBLISHER: MTR | GENRE: SIM | ALTERNATIVE | PRICE: \$9.99

After we reviewed the retail version of *Order Up!!* in *Nintendo Power* Vol. 275, we found out it had been delayed and eventually replaced with this downloadable eShop version. And although I gave the full-priced retail edition a middling score, I feel that the title is well worth checking out in its reasonably priced downloadable form. Nothing has been lost in the transition; it still offers fun cooking-themed minigames and an ever-growing recipe list as you strive to become the greatest chef in town. It also boasts entertaining dialogue and a good sense of progression that similar games lack. An additional restaurant makes this title even more satisfying than its Wii predecessor, and although the gameplay is inherently repetitive, that's hardly a deal-breaker. —CHRIS K.

Recommended

“DO A BARREL ROLL!”

—PEPPY HARE, STAR FOX 64, 1997

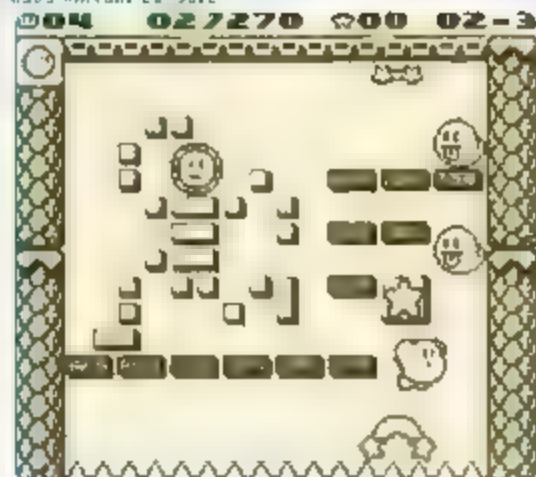


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FUTURE
COMICS

EVALUATION STATION

NDS NINTENDO, CONSOLE



KIRBY'S BLOCK BALL

DEV: FURIA GAMES; DEV: ORIGINAL; PUBLISHED: NINTENDO
GENRE: ACTION; PRICE: \$2.99

No stranger to venturing outside platformers, Kirby appears as the ball in this Arkanoid-inspired block-breaking game. The physics aren't the best, so Kirby sometimes doesn't bounce where you'd like him to, but Block Ball is less about realism than about wildly varied stages and Kirby's trademark form-altering power-ups. Stages in which you control paddles along all four walls lead to some enjoyably hectic challenges. —PHIL Y

Recommended

NDS NINTENDO, CONSOLE



GAME & WATCH GALLERY 2

PUBLISHED: GAMES BOY; DEV: GAMES BOY; PUBLISHED: NINTENDO
GENRE: ACTION; PRICE: \$2.99

This collection of Nintendo's classic LCD games ups the ante on its predecessor by including more titles and more unlockable bonuses. The Game & Watch titles are terrific when you want a quick test of your reflexes, and all of the ones included here are pretty darn fun. It is a bit weird seeing the two-screen Donkey Kong G&W game crammed onto one screen on the dual-screened NDS, but such is the nature of Virtual Console. —PHIL Y

Recommended

DSiWARE



99BULLETS

PUBLISHED: H&K; DEV: H&K
GENRE: ACT; PRICE: \$1.99

Shifting gears from its predecessor (99Bullets), 99Seconds limits the time in which players survive collisions as they dodge a polygonal maelstrom. The only weapon offered is the ability to slow (or reverse) time. As with the first game, the interesting premise and visuals form a winning combo. —PATRICK C

Recommended

NDS NINTENDO, CONSOLE



RAYMAN

PUBLISHED: GAMES BOY; DEV: ORIGINAL; PUBLISHED: NINTENDO
GENRE: PLATFORMER; PRICE: \$4.99

As any fan knows, Rayman offers classic platforming. This port, however, is of dubious value: It's a largely hobbled affair compared to the original. In addition to the expected graphical concessions, parts of the story, several characters, and even large swathes of gameplay are wholly absent. If you're willing to pay a bit more, go for the DSiWare version, which largely remedies these issues. If not, this'll have to do! —PATRICK C

DSiWARE



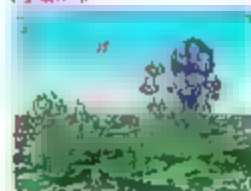
AMOEBAATTLE

PUBLISHED: GAMES BOY; DEV: STRATEGY; PRICE: \$4.99

Amoebattle fits comfortably into the real-time strategy genre, but instead of gathering resources and building a base, you use the stylus to manipulate groups of protozoa, which can mutate, duplicate, and conquer. Mikromanaging your prokaryotes can be challenging, as you're sometimes required to spill your army or find a food source in addition to executing combat maneuvers. However, the game's adorable amoebas, engaging missions, responsive controls, and well-designed interface keep things interesting and exciting. And with 12 missions at roughly 30 minutes each, there's a lot of content here (although I do wish there were a multiplayer option). The music, unfortunately, sometimes sounds like garbled static. —ODDY W

Recommended

DSiWARE



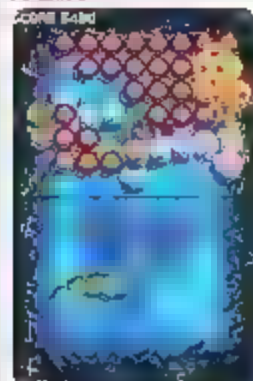
PAUL'S SHOOTING ADVENTURE

PUBLISHED: SHIR; DEV: JUSTICE
GENRE: SHOOTER; PRICE: \$1.99

While Paul's latest adventure offers a fairly middling and repetitive shooter experience, defeating wave after wave of the insertion menace is considerably more fun than it should be for one simple reason: weapons. Six projectiles are available, and each can be charged to deliver variations on its base attacks; as a result, choosing the best tool for a given job is strangely strategic. The inclusion of co-op play sweetens the deal further. —PATRICK C

ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY
NINTENDO DS DOWNLOAD
NINTENDO DS DOWNLOAD

DS WARE



SLAKENDOID DELUXE

PUBLISHER CINEMAX
E.C. N. ACTION
PRICE \$59 POINTS/\$4.99

Snakendoid Deluxe offers a reptilian take on the classic Breakout, Arkanoid formula. Unfortunately, the game's polish is wholly voided by the foolishness of its premise: by trading the customary paddle for a wiggly, stylus-controlled snake. Cinemax reduces the action to an unplayable mess.

—PATRICK C.

Grumble Grumble

DS WARE



METAL SLUG 3

U.S. RELEASED ORIGINALLY IN 2000
U.S. RELEASED BY ENTERPRISE/BN
SHORTER PU 100 POINTS

Metal Slug 3 has everything that makes the series great: challenging-yet-fun shoot-'em-up gameplay (which is at its best when you're playing with a buddy), impressively rendered sprites, and awesomely over-the-top enemies. This title outshines its predecessors by including even zanier opponents and adding branching paths in the levels. As much as I like Metal Slug 3, though, I would be remiss if I didn't point out two issues I had with the game. First, it seems odd that the human and zombie foes sweat instead of bleed. Second, I encountered some irritating slowdown when the action got too crazy.

—JUSTIN C.

Recommended

DS WARE



MONSTER WORLD IV

U.S. RELEASED BY SEGA GENESIS IN 1994
U.S. RELEASED BY SEGA GENESIS IN 1994
ADVENTURE 100 POINTS

Phil T.'s Pick



Previously available only in Japan, Monster World IV has finally reached the States, and it's been translated into English, to boot. That alone makes this game a fairly big deal, but it doesn't hurt that it's pretty fantastic. It's fairly linear for an action RPG, but the levels are

large and the addition of a cute little sidekick who helps you pull off new moves (including a double jump) adds some technique to the adventure. It's also one of the best-looking and -sounding games for the Genesis. Don't pass this one by.

—PHIL T.

Recommended

DS WARE



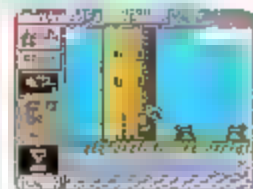
SUPER HANG-ON

U.S. RELEASED BY SEGA
U.S. RELEASED BY SEGA
RACING 100 POINTS

There's a lot to be said about the pure, straightforward, high-speed thrills of a classic arcade racer, but I have to admit that Super Hang-On shows its age. Aside from some cool control options (including a Wii Wheel configuration), there just isn't much here: you get only four tracks and very little in the way of technique. The price is also on the high side: \$9 seems pretty steep for a game you used to be able to play for a few quarters.

—CHRIS M.

DS WARE



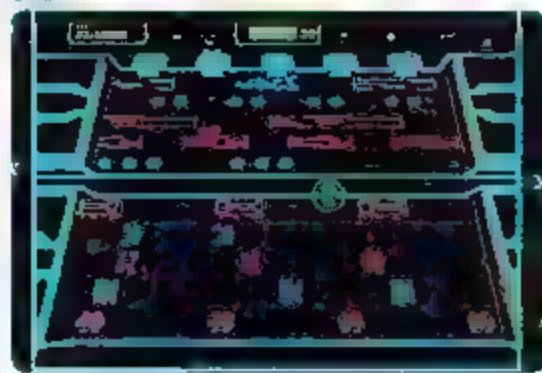
WONDER BOY IN MONSTER LAND

U.S. RELEASED BY SEGA
U.S. RELEASED BY SEGA
ADVENTURE 100 POINTS

Taken on its own, Wonder Boy in Monster Land is an enjoyable and challenging game that suffers from a few noticeable flaws (sloppy control, harsh time limits that discourage exploration, dated graphics). It is, however, overshadowed by its similarly themed sequels that are already available on Virtua Console (usually for a lower price). For Wonder Boy junkies only.

—PHIL T.

DS WARE



FROGGER: HYPER ARCADE EDITION

U.S. RELEASED BY KONAMI GENESIS ACTION 100 POINTS

Konami has been attempting to bring back its classic Frogger for years, with mixed results. This latest update is a Pac-Man Championship Edition-style makeover with slick neon graphics, techno music, and a host of new gameplay modes. These variants put a heavy emphasis on multiplayer action with up to four players (and, of course, you can play against the CPU). Some of the modes are a little too hectic for their own good, but the bulk of them are quite enjoyable. Those looking for a more authentic Frogger experience will enjoy the reskinned versions of the original title (including hilarious Contra and Castlevania themes).

—PHIL T.

Recommended

ALSO AVAILABLE



If you're looking for some cerebral eShop challenges, Hamster Corporation has you covered with two new releases: *Sudoku by Niko* and *Kakuro by Niko* (\$4.99 each) will both provide hours upon hours of numeric grid-based puzzles. Just don't expect a lot of frills or options; both titles are pretty minimalist.... What's hidden in the darkness? Find out in DSiWare game *Chronicles of Vampires: The Awakening* (500 Points/\$4.99). Concluding the story that began in *Chronicles of Vampires: Origins*, the game tasks you with finding more than 200 objects in 20-plus locations.

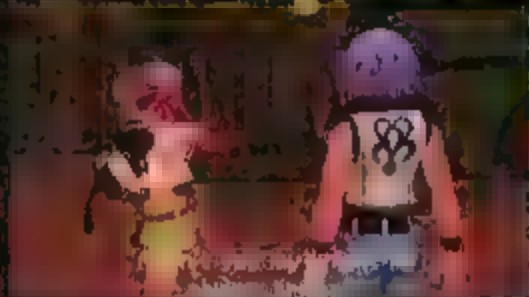
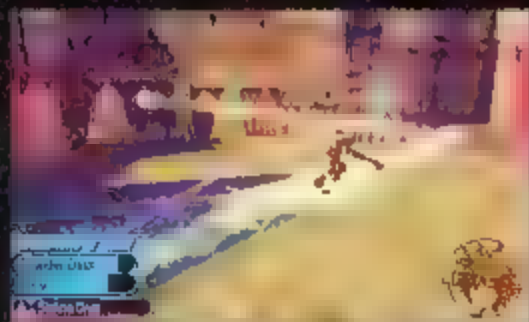
PREVIEWS

IN THIS
SECTION

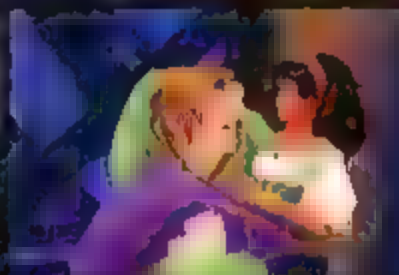


KINGDOM HEARTS 3D: DREAM DROP DISTANCE

It's the stuff that dreams are made of.



Sora and Riku will join forces with characters from popular franchises such as *The World Ends with You* (left) and *TRON: Legacy* (below).

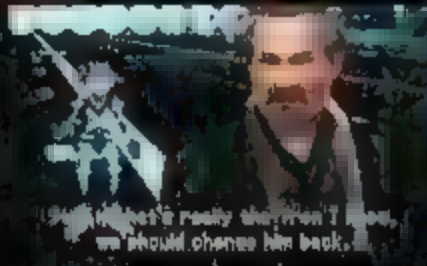


AFTER SAVING MULTIPLE worlds from being swallowed in darkness and stopping the schemes of an assortment of villains, you might think heroic Sora and his best friend Riku would be ready for some rest and relaxation. Fortunately for gamers everywhere, that's not the case. Instead of skiting on their laurels, Sora and Riku, guided by the wizard Yen Sid, are training themselves to become true Keyblade masters—by taking the Mark of Mastery exam in *Kingdom Hearts 3D: Dream Drop Distance*. To pass the exam, the duo must travel to seven Sleeping Worlds—places that are trapped in a never-ending slumber and that even the Heartless cannot enter—and revive them by locating, and unlocking their keyholes.

As always, that means journeying to a variety of lands teeming

with familiar faces from the Disney and Square Enix universes. The game begins on the stormy seas of Destiny Island (the opening stage of the original *Kingdom Hearts*), where Sora and Riku show their stuff by battling Ursula the Sea Witch from *The Little Mermaid*. From there, the pair travels to another familiar location—Traverse Town—where they team up with Neku, Joshua, Shiki, and other characters from the sleeper DS hit *The World Ends with You*.

Traverse Town also gives you a great opportunity to practice using Sora and Riku's acrobatic new moves, dubbed FlowMotion. Sure, you can still smash enemies to a pulp using your Keyblade or activate items, spells, and special moves via your Command Deck, but if you want to knock



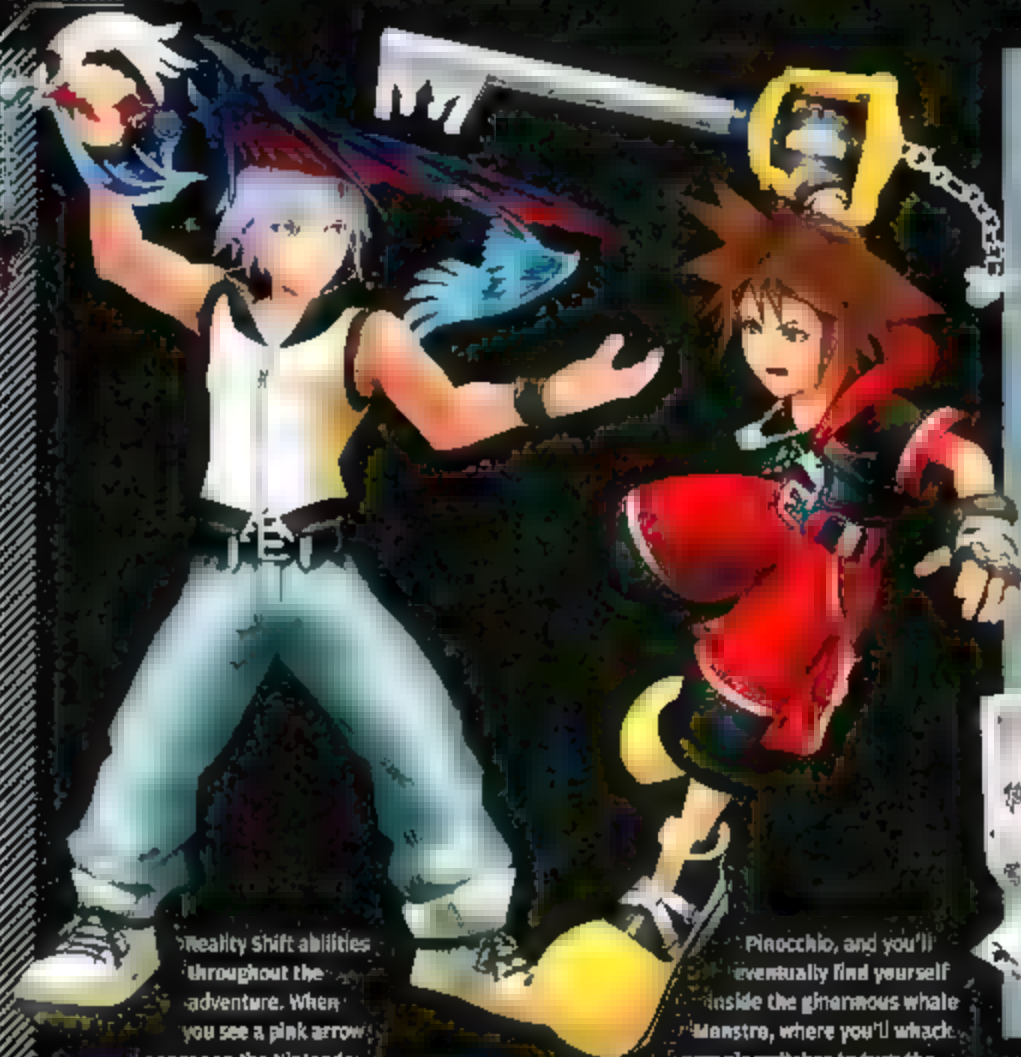
about your foe in the flashiest way possible, FlowMotion is the way to go. If you press the Δ button near an object—a lamp post or wall, for example—you'll interact with the object then launch into an attack, such as rebounding off the wall while twisting like a drill, then somersaulting into a diving smash. (Think of it as aggressive parkour.) You can even use FlowMotion against some enemies—for example, spinning around one foe to smack other enemies in range, then tossing the hapless baddie

across the room.

And FlowMotion isn't the only new trick in your arsenal. The Sleeping Worlds are inhabited by colorful creatures called Dream Eaters, and while the evil ones (Nightmares) make up the bulk of the enemies you'll face, the good ones (Spirits) can be recruited as allies. They come in a myriad of shapes and sizes—inspired by dogs, bats, plants, elephants, and more—and each one can lend you a hand in battle with offensive or defensive capabilities. Up to two Spirits can accompany you at any time (after you've created them using combinations of certain items), and filling up a Spirit's Link Gauge allows you to join forces with it for even more powerful attacks.

You'll also gain access to different





Reality Shift abilities throughout the adventure. When you see a pink arrow appear on the Nintendo

3DS system's touch screen, you can either slide across the arrow or press the A and X Buttons to initiate the Reality Shift. In Traverse Town, the maneuver allows you to launch items and enemies as if they were pellets in a slingshot, but in later stages you'll be able to ride around on energy rails, assemble words to create secret codes (each with different effects), encase enemies in bubbles, and more.

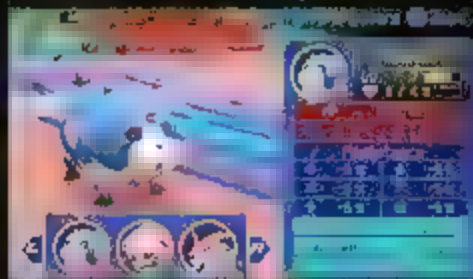
Of course, arguably the best part about Kingdom Hearts is the variety of places to visit and characters to meet, and Dream Drop Distance is no different. After leaving Traverse Town you get to choose from three different realms, including La Cité des Cloches, which is inspired by *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*. Assisting the hunchback Quasimodo and the gypsy Esmeralda, you'll do battle against the evil forces brought forth by the manipulative and sinister Lord Frodo. Meanwhile, in The Grid, you'll come face-to-face with the characters of *TRON: Legacy*, including photorealistic representations of Kevin Flynn, Sam Flynn, and Quorra, as well as Tron himself. You'll also get to battle foes while driving one of the film's famed light-cycles! Prankster's Paradise (based on *Pinocchio*) offers different types of challenges; you'll explore an amusement park and a fun-house as you help Jiminy Cricket try to rescue

Pinocchio, and you'll eventually find yourself inside the ginormous whale Manstro, where you'll whack organic switches to turn the environments upside down.

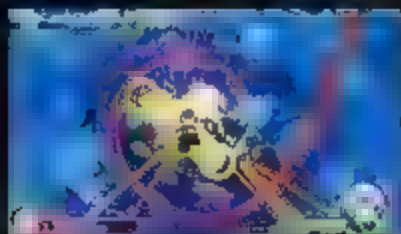
Making things even more interesting is the fact that Sora and Riku each have their own stories to experience. As you play through the game, you'll switch back and forth between characters, sometimes investigating separate events and at other times witnessing the same happenings from different perspectives. But no matter which

character you're controlling, you can count on gorgeous visuals, loads of action, tons of charm, crazy plot twists, and that Disney-meets-Square Enix magic that only Kingdom Hearts can provide. —CHRIS H.

PUBLISHER: SQUARE ENIX
DEVELOPER: SQUARE ENIX
RELEASE: JULY 2012



(Below) Each level begins with a dynamic 3D descent into the environment.



You might know **Joshua.**

He loves video games, and he owns enough to know they're not all meant for kids. That's why he reminds his friends (at least the ones that have kids) that they all have to help parents find the ones that are best for their families.

You can learn about those ratings at **ESRB.org**

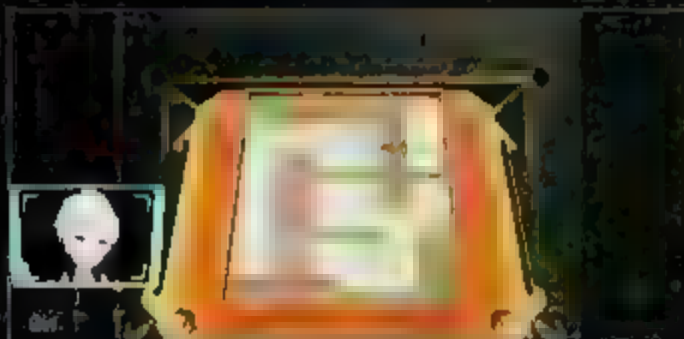


Los Angeles, CA

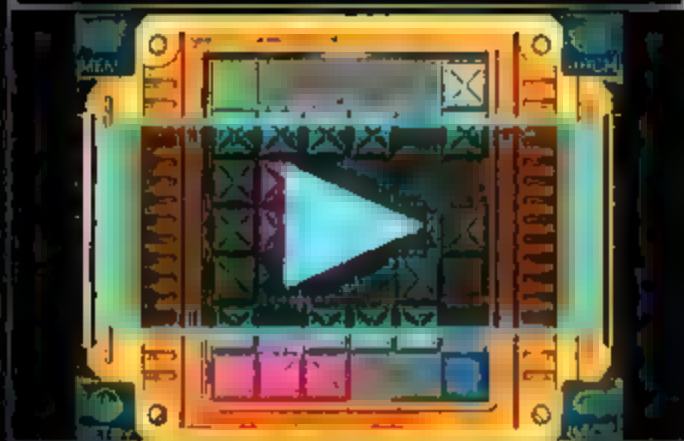


ENTERTAINMENT SOFTWARE
RATING BOARD





It looks like some kind of maze. @



What the hell is this thing? @

[Below] Phi looks innocent enough, but it's hard to know who to trust when you're playing a game of life, death, and deception



It's just, you're not really making sense here... @

VIRTUE'S LAST REWARD

999 problems, but a glitch ain't one.

AFTER A HARD day of grad school, I turned on my car's ignition and, suddenly groggy, wondered why his vehicle was filling up with white gas. When he awoke, he was trapped in an elevator with a poison-dispensing watch strapped to his wrist and forced by a psychopathic computer-animated rabbit to play a game of backstabbing and puzzle-solving to win back his freedom. Just a typical day. In Aksys's Zero Escape series, where players alternate between solving crafty puzzles and viewing visual-novel segments that are packed with shocking plot

twists. If you haven't played the series's first entry—the fantastic (albeit M-rated) *Nine Hours, Nine Persons, Nine Doors* for the Nintendo DS—you still have a few months to remedy that mistake before this game debuts. *Virtue's Last Reward* stands on its own, but it also revisits many of the characters and plotlines from its predecessor.

While the game's structure and storytelling style will be instantly familiar to 999 veterans, the jump from Nintendo DS to the Nintendo 3DS handheld has allowed for some significant upgrades in the series's production values. The puzzle rooms are now modeled in real time, allowing players to explore them freely instead of jumping between preset angles. The puzzles include minigames, such as guiding marbles through a maze, that use the 3DS gyre sensor in

ways that actually seem natural and intuitive. Additionally, in the game's novel segments, every line of dialogue, even from the supporting cast, is fully voiced, and the modeled characters move their lips and bodies as they talk, adding some charm and energy to the lengthy conversations. And in a game that has you ruthlessly betraying friends to win a contest that can produce but one survivor, a little charm goes an awfully long way.

—BAREY
PUBLISHED BY:
AKSYS GAMES
DEVELOPER: DMMGAMES
RELEASE: FALL 2012



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WANT TO GET THE MOST OUT OF IT?





TRANSFORMERS: PRIME—THE GAME

The robots in disguise get primed for action.

MOST PEOPLE RECOGNIZE the Transformers from the Michael Bay-directed movies or from the original '80s cartoon, but there have been numerous iterations of the popular franchise since its inception. The latest is *Transformers: Prime*, a weekly CG-animated TV show—well into its second season at the time of this writing—wherein Optimus Prime and his small band of Autobots (consisting of Arcee, Bulkhead, Bumblebee, and Ratchet) defend Earth from Megatron and his Decepticon forces. It's a basic premise, sure, but the series is chock-full of action and compelling characters—which makes it an ideal subject for a game.

Certainly, being a brawler based upon the show and having the show's voice actors reprise their roles should be enough to pique fans' interests, but *Transformers: Prime—The Game* goes the extra mile with its story, which is a

collaboration between Activision and Hasbro. Shiva Deonarine, an associate producer at Activision, elaborates: "The story for the game is unique, all-new, and runs parallel to the events happening in season two of the TV show. We begin with the Decepticons intercepting a mysterious meteor approaching the earth and

the Autobots arriving to try and thwart their plans. Due to a massive eruption of power during a battle on the meteor, the Autobots are separated from each other, plunge to Earth, and lose contact with (their young human allies Jack, Mike, and Raf) who are monitoring them at base. Unknown to the Autobots and the kids,



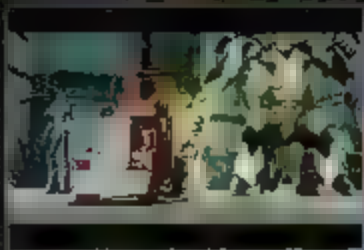
the Decepticons may have uncovered an ancient power that could mean the end of the Autobots and possibly the earth."

The game allows you to play as all five Autobots (the one you control changes depending on the level), each with advantages. For instance, Deonarine tells us, "Arcee is very quick and acrobatic with her attacks while Bulkhead, although a bit slower, hits much harder."

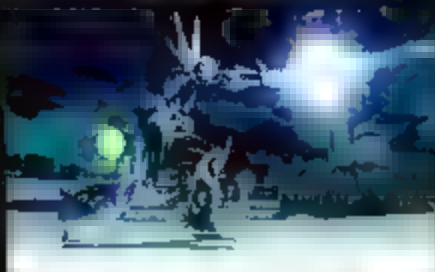
Furthermore, "all of the playable characters have power-up abilities. Essentially the player has an upgrade meter, and when it's full they can unleash advanced combos and weapon fire on their enemies. Their entire combat system is upgraded while still maintaining the uniqueness of each character." Of course, playing as giant robots is only half the story; these are Transformers we're talking about, after all.

"There is huge emphasis on using both robot and vehicle mode to the player's benefit. The player can change form at will and must use both forms in order to progress. [Different] abilities are available if you are in robot or vehicle mode, and you will need to use both in order to defeat your foes," Deonarine explains.

The primary foes you'll face are the Vehicons, the Transformers: Prime equivalent of the battle droids from the Star Wars prequels. In the show there are two types of Vehicons—they transform into either a car or a jet—but Activision worked with Hasbro to create three new versions of Vehicons that they plan to reveal sometime closer to the game's release.



There are five playable characters in the story mode, but there are 11 to choose from in the yet-to-be-revealed multiplayer mode.

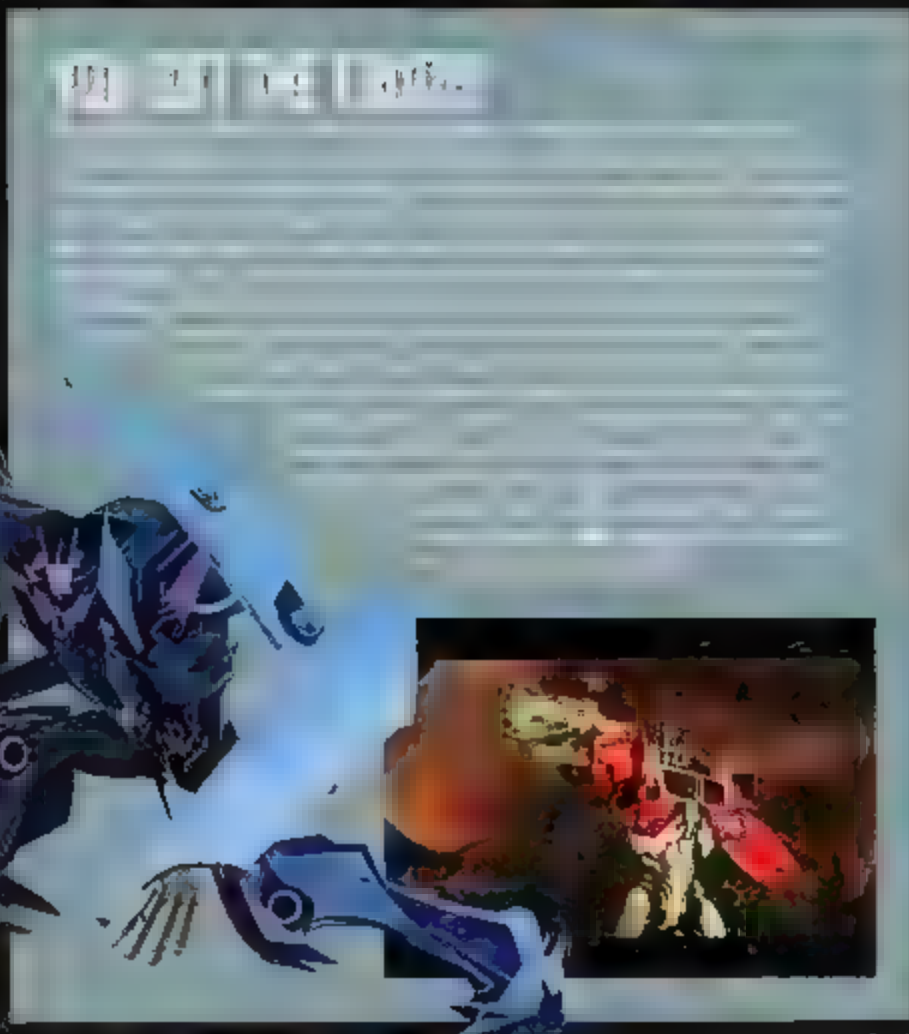


In addition to these fodder enemies, you will encounter bosses. "We have many boss battles and really tried to make them unique and awesome," says Deonarine. "All the Autobots square off against Decepticons. Old rivalries,

definitely come into play here, and some new ones are forged. For example, we have Airachnid and Arcee battle it out. The fights take place in various locations, so the environments play a role. The player must use the environments to their advantage to defeat their enemies."

Based on what we've seen so far, Transformers: Prime—The Game seems to be extremely faithful to the source material. As fans of the TV show ourselves, we can't wait to experience the end result. —JUSTIN C.

PUBLISHER: ACTIVISION
DEVELOPER: NAWROD
RELEASE: OCTOBER 2012





THE LAST STORY

The minds behind Final Fantasy deliver a story of epic proportions.

As you would probably tell from our massive amounts of coverage over the past few issues, we're pretty excited about The Last Story.

And with good reason: It's a full-blown role-playing game directed by Final Fantasy creator Tetsuya Nomura and with music by leg-

endary composer Nobuo Uematsu. But even though this fantasy epic has all the polish and distinctive visual style that you'd expect from

a classic Japanese RPG, The Last Story is far from traditional or clichéd.

A unique real-time combat



Zael's mercenary allies are an interesting bunch to say the least.

system allows you to take cover from attacks, power up in circles of magic, and snipe at enemies from afar; you can even target parts of the destructible environments to obliterate your foes. Naturally, you can get up close and personal with sword-based strikes, as well, and a big part of battle strategy involves using protagonist Zael's abilities to draw enemies' attention while your allies do their stuff.

The interaction between Zael and his comrades promises to be one of the highlights of the game; as part of a group of mercenaries, Zael is surrounded by an assortment of colorful characters—such as his longtime friend Dargan, unsociable mage Yurick, and the hard-hitting, hard-partying Syrenne—who seem to have a lot more depth than the usual RPG stereotypes. But it's Zael's relationship with a princess named Callista that could be the game's strongest narrative element; unlike some

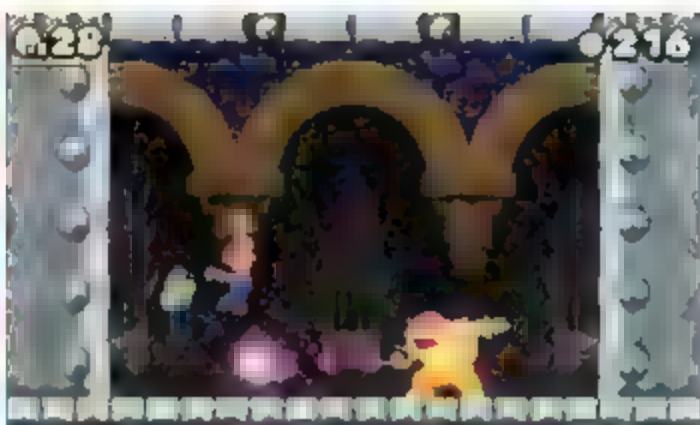
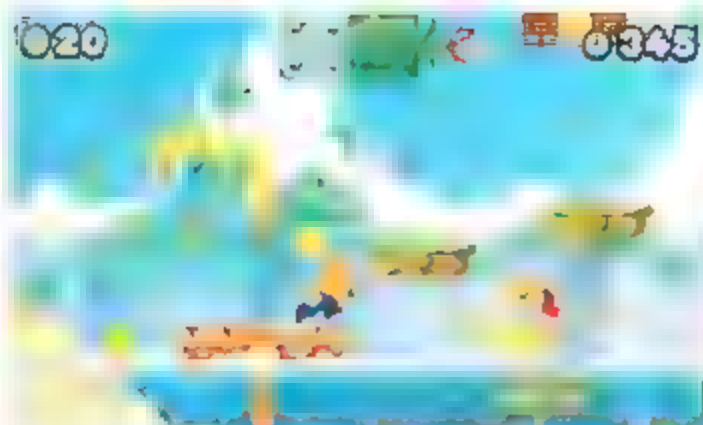
games in which romances are only hinted at, *The Last Story* makes Zael and Callista's feelings for each other evident from the start. This isn't necessarily an RPG about grandiose world-altering events; players can expect an adventure on a much more intimate scale.

Other highlights include loads of side quests, plentiful combat-customization options, and online battles (for up to six players) that allow you to earn rare items. *The Last Story* has all the ingredients to be one of the must-have games of the year. —CHRIS W.

PUBLISHER: NIPPON BUNRISHO
DEVELOPER: NIPPON BUNRISHO
AN INTERACTIVE
RELEASE: SUMMER 2008







The Gold Standard

Old-school Mario platforming and a newfound lust for loot meet in **New Super Mario Bros. 2** for the Nintendo 3DS handheld.

IT'S HARD not to feel sorry to see the classic Mario Bros. franchise suddenly has more gold than it has ever had before.

It's not just the new power-ups that generate gold, but the new Coin Rush mode that lets you play three consecutive levels selected from among the worlds you've visited in the standard single-player mode. You get only a single life, with no way to earn I-ups, and each level is timed. Your goal is to gather as many coins as possible, and if you

successfully complete the sequence of levels, your coin tally will be recorded and shared with everyone you StreetPass. If they want to try to beat your best effort, they can play the same three-level set in their own game and throw their score right back at you when next you pass.

New Super Mario Bros. 2 is all about the coins. You know those shiny spinning things that until now you've mostly just picked up to hear that satisfying ding sound? New Super Mario Bros. 2 has so many coins that the traditional counter in each level has been expanded from two digits to four, and even space for 9,999 coins might not be enough. The game also keeps track of every coin you collect over the lifetime of the

game, dutifully talling them on the title screen as Mario amasses a fortune that may one day put even Luigi to shame. Both of the game's newly revealed power-ups have been designed to generate ludicrous amounts of cash, and under the right circumstances even Mario's foes can be transformed into coin-spewing machines. What can you do with all these coins? We don't yet know the full answer to that, but the game's new Coin

Rush mode does a wonderful job of demonstrating how much fun rampant money-grubbing can be.

TAKE THE MONEY AND RUN

In Coin Rush mode, you play three consecutive levels selected from among the worlds you've visited in the standard single-player mode. You get only a single life, with no way to earn I-ups, and each level is timed. Your goal is to gather as many coins as possible, and if you

successfully complete the sequence of levels, your coin tally will be recorded and shared with everyone you StreetPass. If they want to try to beat your best effort, they can play the same three-level set in their own game and throw their score right back at you when next you pass.

The thing that makes Coin Rush mode so infectious is that there are always more coins to get. Mario can jump through gold rings that





[Above] Peanors made their series debut in *Super Mario World*, but the phone hasn't rung since. Nice to see them getting some work in *NSMB2*.



for a limited time, make every enemy into a source of currency: Cheep-Cheeps leap out of the water with a trail of coins behind them, kicked Koopa shells scatter coins along their course, and geysers of coins erupt from the pipes of defeated Piranha Plants. And Mario has two new power-ups that can put hundreds of coins in his pocket. A gold flower will turn our hero into Gold Mario, who has the ability to fire projectiles. It's similar to the classic Fire Mario, but Gold Mario's projectiles turn everything they

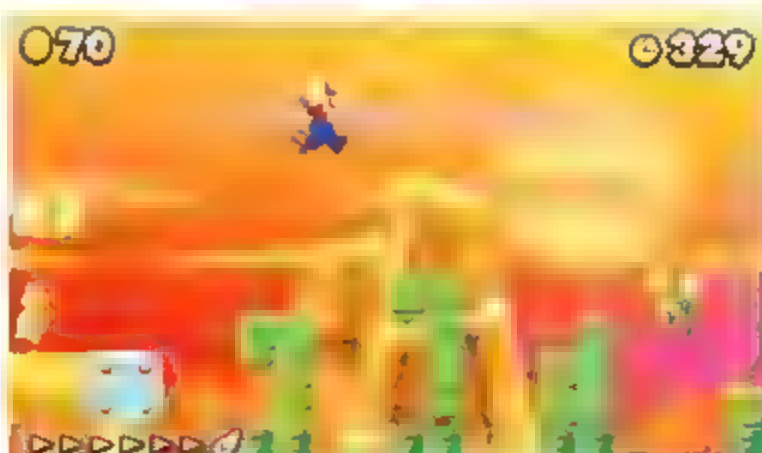
touch into coins, allowing him to rapidly transform brick walls into piles of cash and dispense with foes in the most lucrative way possible. Another new power-up appears after you extract all the coins from a coin block. The block falls on Mario's head, and for as long as it's there (it lasts for several seconds), Mario will generate a coin with each step he takes. The faster Mario moves, the faster he gains coins, so players with the skill to make a mad dash through the level can generate massive quantities of

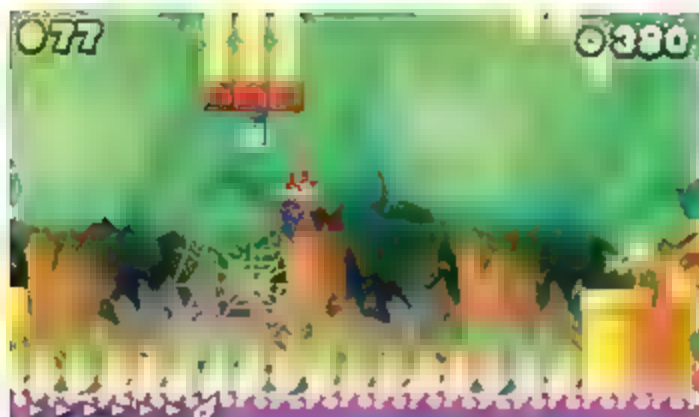


coins before the block falls off.

But the best source of Coin Rush mode's coins is the flagpole at the end of each level. By executing a perfectly timed jump or using the right power-up to hit the very top of the flagpole, your coin total

straight-up doubles. If you're judicious about hunting down each level's hidden coins and skilled at topping the flagpoles, you can easily end a Coin Rush challenge with several thousand coins in your pocket.





THE OTHER SIDE OF THE COIN

While Coin Rush mode offers a challenging new way to test your skills and compete with friends, the heart of New Super Mario Bros. 2 is, as always, the standard story mode. While we've only been able to see a few levels, it seems to be exactly what one would expect from a

modern Mario game: multiple worlds that each have a scrolling overworld map, three hidden Star Coins per level, and the usual assortment of Mario gimmicks and power-ups. The coin theme pops up constantly, adding a new twist to many classic Mario mechanics. Find a hidden switch and pipes shower you with coins. An

all-coin version of the classic rotating power-up boxes can reward you with as many as 50 coins if you hit it at just the right moment. And some of the hidden rooms offer an embarrassment of riches that tops anything seen in previous installments of the series. (And yes, in the story mode you still do get a 1-up for every 100

coins, so you probably won't need to worry about running out of lives.)

The coolest thing about the story mode is that, as in New Super Mario Bros. Wii, you needn't go it alone. Two-player co-op is available throughout the entire game—not simply on preselected levels, as in the original New Super Mario Bros.




The Taxonomy of Mario Flight

In addition to the two new coin-themed power-ups, New Super Mario Bros. 2 features the return of Super Leaves, which transform our pudgy hero into Raccoon Mario, a form that hasn't been seen since Super Mario Bros. 3.

But wait, you say, weren't Super Leaves in the recent Super Mario 3D Land? They were, but in that game they transformed Mario into

Tanooki Mario, who lacks Raccoon Mario's ability to perform true elevation-gaining flight after charging up from a long dash. Of course, the Tanooki Mario from Super Mario 3D Land shouldn't be mistaken for the one from Super Mario Bros. 3, who did have the power of flight. Confused yet? We are too. That's why we keep a printout of this handy chart in our wallets at all times.

MARIO FORM	APPEARS IN	POWER-UP	HOLD JUMP BUTTON TO GLIDE?	FLY UPWARDS AFTER A LONG DASH?	SWING TAIL TO ATTACK ENEMIES	TRANSFORM INTO STATUE?
	Super Mario Bros. 3, New Super Mario Bros. 2	Super Leaf	Yes	Heck yeah!	Yes	No
	Super Mario Bros. 3	Tanooki Suit	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Super Mario 3D Land	Super Leaf or Statue Leaf	Yes	No	Yes	Only with Statue Leaf



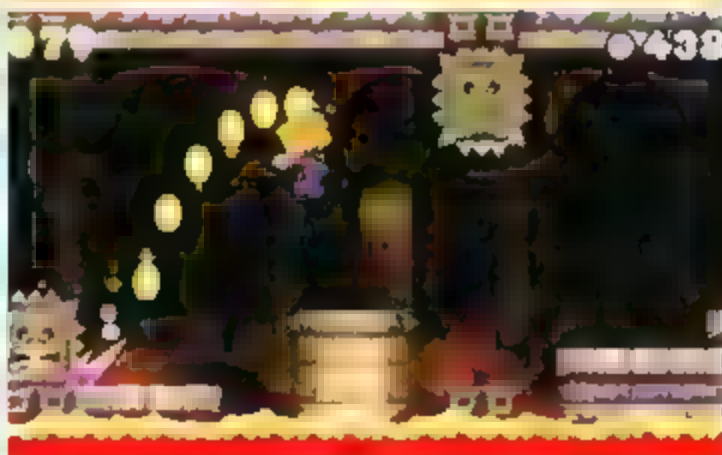
(Almost) All that glitters isn't gold. But with a few well-placed stomps or fireballs, all that glitters can be turned to gold!



(Since it's local wireless play, your partner will also need an N3DS and a copy of the game). The experience is much more cooperative this time around; players can't throw each other around and knock each other off ledges as effectively as they could in *New Super Mario Bros. Wii*, and lives and coins are now shared between partners, with power-ups also coming in pairs. It's a great mode for veterans to play with less-experienced players, who can always jump into a bubble and glide safely through the tougher parts of a level.

The 3D effects in *New Super Mario Bros. 2* are subtle—none of the levels we played had anything as impactful as the sense of depth in *Super Mario*

3D Land. But it does have one nice trick: Raising the 3D slider softens the background layer of the game, **blurring** the action on the foreground layer to pop out of the screen. It looks nice, and is easy on the eyes during extended play sessions.



THE MARIO EXPERIENCE

The *New Super Mario Bros.* series has always done a great job of updating the classic side-scrolling Mario experience with modern visuals, and the few levels we've had the opportunity to play certainly live up to the legacy established by

the game's handheld and console predecessors. That part was no surprise—but the tense challenge of Coin Rush mode isn't something we ever expected to find in the Mario franchise. The combination of having no margin for error, a timer, and an urge to beat local records forces players to hone their platforming skills and weigh a steady stream of calculated risks in their quest to grab as many coins as possible.

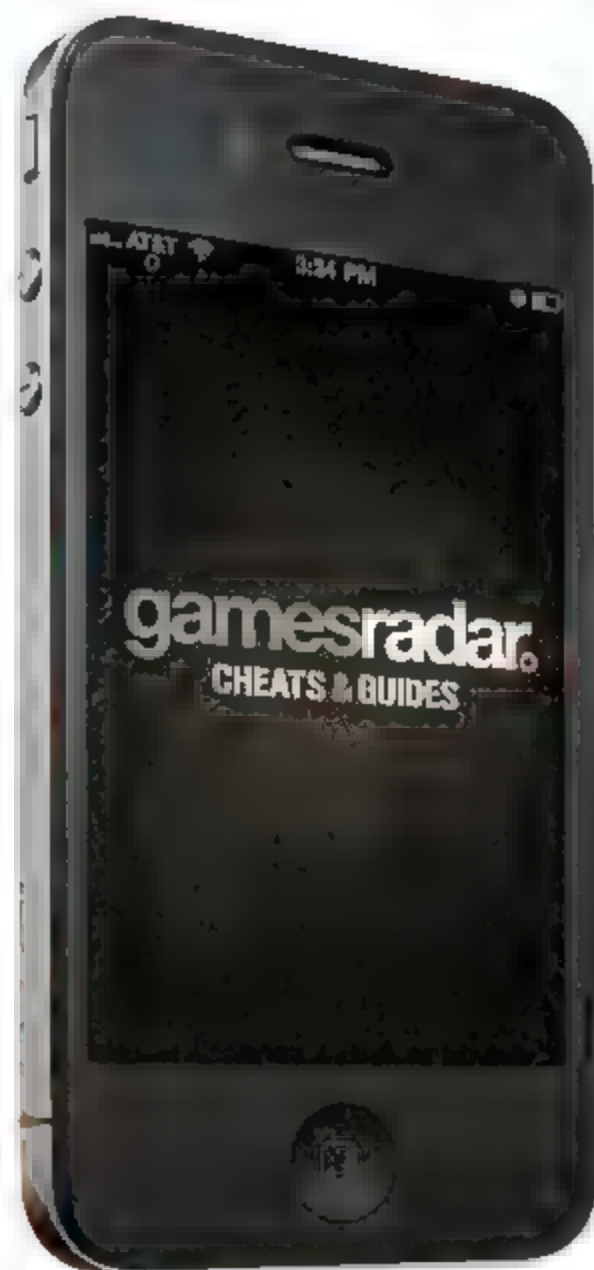
Whatever your mode of choice, *New Super Mario Bros. 2* will leave you dreaming of shiny, spinning coins for months to come.





Amazing app, and it's FREE!

by Vitsnuklz



“★★★★★
THE BEST GUIDES
on the internet...
ALL IN ONE PLACE”
by Samas76

“★★★★★
Thank you GamesRadar for
**FEEDING MY
ADDICTION**”
by Polyrascott

“★★★★★
GamesRadar is
FULL OF WIN”
by Marcello Almaguer

“★★★★★
AWESOMESAUCE!
Great app. I love!”
by [illegible]



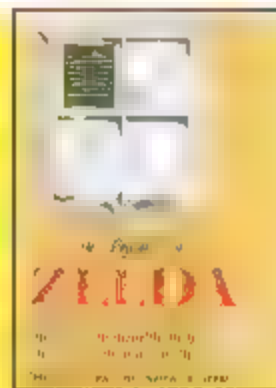
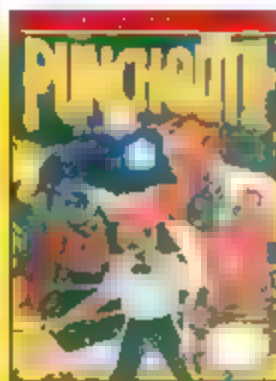
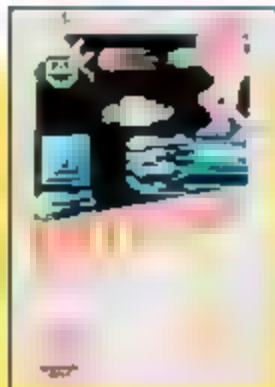
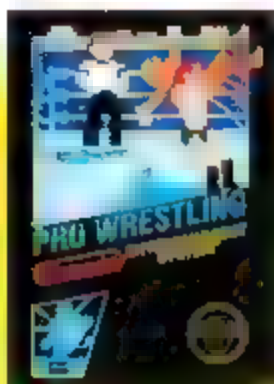
Think guidebooks are too heavy? Is your computer too far away from your console? Do you hate standing up? If so, download our gift to couch potatoes!

DESTINATION

1987

We're in the way-back machine and warp to a fondly remembered year that gave birth to directly or indirectly award-winning titles

BY CHRIS HOFFMAN & PHIL THEORAND



THE LEGEND OF ZELDA Metroid Kid Icarus. Pro Wrestling. Punch-Out!! What do those Nintendo-published games have in common, aside from being some of the most celebrated titles in the history of video gaming? All of them hit North America in 1987, a whopping 25 years ago. Sure, Nintendo has always had a track record of releasing great game after great game, but in 1987 something special was going on. With the interactive-entertainment industry still in its infancy, Nintendo had no trouble lining up one megahit after another, taking players to places they'd never been— from fantasy worlds to high-tech futures to the middle of the squared circle— and introducing them to types of gameplay they never even knew existed. An exciting time? You better believe it. To see just how exciting, we're taking a look back at these groundbreaking titles and checking out how they were covered by the Nintendo Fun Club News back in the day, as well as seeing how they've held up over the last quarter-century.

PRO WRESTLING

MARCH 1987



WHY IT WAS A BIG DEAL

Professional wrestling was huge in the mid 1980s, but before Pro Wrestling came out, there were only a couple of other grappling titles on the NES—and they weren't very good. Despite Pro Wrestling's lack of an authentic license or famous performers, it delivered the crazy in-ring action that fans craved. Six playable characters plus a nonplayable boss helped ensure that wrestling mania ran wild.



WHAT THEY SAID THEN

PRO WRESTLING: THE ACTION'S GOING TO FLOOR YOU!

Here, the guys are a sight, and the one in the ring is helping them to be sure of the special moves. The game is a real one, and the guys are really in the ring.

It's a real one, and the guys are really in the ring. The game is a real one, and the guys are really in the ring. The game is a real one, and the guys are really in the ring.

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The game is a real one, and the guys are really in the ring. The game is a real one, and the guys are really in the ring. The game is a real one, and the guys are really in the ring.

WHAT WE SAY NOW

A lot of officially licensed wrestling games tend to feel dated because of their character rosters. Not so with Pro Wrestling—the likes of the Amazon, Star Man, and Kin Corn Karn help give the game a timeless feel. Furthermore, the inclusion of personalized moves (leaping attacks from the turnbuckle) and the ability to throw your opponent out of the ring and then follow up with an over-the-top rope flying splash made Pro Wrestling way ahead of its time. Such versatility didn't become commonplace in other wrestling games for years. Of course, Pro Wrestling also holds a special place in history because of its memorable declaration of victory: "A winner is you." It's too bad Pro Wrestling never became a franchise many fans would love to see a modern-day update.



TIMELINE

Sure, the NES was probably the hottest thing going in 1987, but it wasn't the only thing. Here's what else was popular 25 years ago.

Arnold Schwarzenegger becomes the first man inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

President Ronald Reagan undergoes prostate surgery.

The Warner Bros. Yearling wins Best Picture at the Oscars.

Michael Jackson performs on the MTV Music Awards.



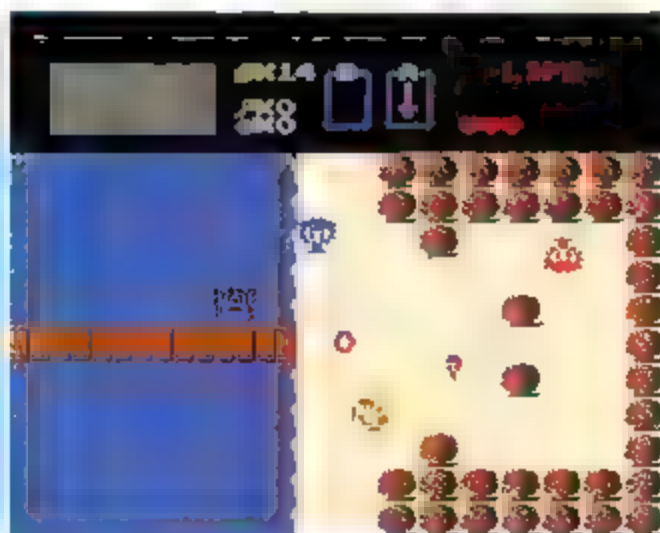
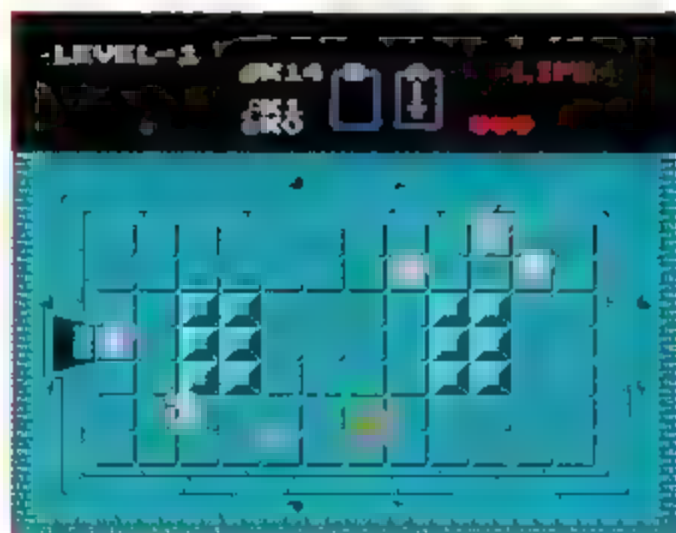
THE LEGEND OF ZELDA

JULY 1987

WHY IT WAS A BIG DEAL

The Legend of Zelda basically changed everything. In an era when most games were single-screen affairs or required you to move in one direction, The Legend of Zelda provided a vast nonlinear world full of

exploration and choices. The game merged reflex-based action with unprecedented depth, and the high-fantasy setting let players unleash their imaginations. Nothing else. The game was hard to resist due to its shiny gold cartridge.



Actress
Ellen Page (except and
is born.

Artist
Andy Warhol passes
away.

Artist
Weapons released
in theaters.

The band
Episode of the
a Team arrives on NBC.

The rock
band of the
The Jynxers.

The Chicago Bulls set an indoor
arena record for a live sporting event at
the Pontiac Silverdome in Pontiac, Michigan.

May
Hushboard debut
of ABC.

WHAT THEY SAID THEN

The Legend of ZELDA™:
A new video game for
adventurous players only.

This game is not for the faint-hearted when player 11 will make your nerves jump. Our blood-soaked army has eyes that will at all times be on you!

The program begins in the morning with a visit to the historic site of the first settlement in the area. The tour is led by a local guide who provides a detailed history of the region. The program continues with a visit to the local museum, where visitors can learn more about the area's culture and heritage. The day concludes with a picnic in a beautiful park, followed by a short presentation on the local environment.

Belknap's Notes Triforce
of Wisdom

He then also was a witness to the fact that the American and the British were in the same place at the same time, and that they were both in the same place at the same time.

1016. 1017. 1018. 1019. 1020. 1021. 1022. 1023. 1024. 1025. 1026. 1027. 1028. 1029. 1030. 1031. 1032. 1033. 1034. 1035. 1036. 1037. 1038. 1039. 1040. 1041. 1042. 1043. 1044. 1045. 1046. 1047. 1048. 1049. 1050. 1051. 1052. 1053. 1054. 1055. 1056. 1057. 1058. 1059. 1060. 1061. 1062. 1063. 1064. 1065. 1066. 1067. 1068. 1069. 1070. 1071. 1072. 1073. 1074. 1075. 1076. 1077. 1078. 1079. 1080. 1081. 1082. 1083. 1084. 1085. 1086. 1087. 1088. 1089. 1090. 1091. 1092. 1093. 1094. 1095. 1096. 1097. 1098. 1099. 1100. 1101. 1102. 1103. 1104. 1105. 1106. 1107. 1108. 1109. 1110. 1111. 1112. 1113. 1114. 1115. 1116. 1117. 1118. 1119. 1120. 1121. 1122. 1123. 1124. 1125. 1126. 1127. 1128. 1129. 1130. 1131. 1132. 1133. 1134. 1135. 1136. 1137. 1138. 1139. 1140. 1141. 1142. 1143. 1144. 1145. 1146. 1147. 1148. 1149. 1150. 1151. 1152. 1153. 1154. 1155. 1156. 1157. 1158. 1159. 1160. 1161. 1162. 1163. 1164. 1165. 1166. 1167. 1168. 1169. 1170. 1171. 1172. 1173. 1174. 1175. 1176. 1177. 1178. 1179. 1180. 1181. 1182. 1183. 1184. 1185. 1186. 1187. 1188. 1189. 1190. 1191. 1192. 1193. 1194. 1195. 1196. 1197. 1198. 1199. 1200. 1201. 1202. 1203. 1204. 1205. 1206. 1207. 1208. 1209. 1210. 1211. 1212. 1213. 1214. 1215. 1216. 1217. 1218. 1219. 1220. 1221. 1222. 1223. 1224. 1225. 1226. 1227. 1228. 1229. 1230. 1231. 1232. 1233. 1234. 1235. 1236. 1237. 1238. 1239. 1240. 1241. 1242. 1243. 1244. 1245. 1246. 1247. 1248. 1249. 1250. 1251. 1252. 1253. 1254. 1255. 1256. 1257. 1258. 1259. 1260. 1261. 1262. 1263. 1264. 1265. 1266. 1267. 1268. 1269. 1270. 1271. 1272. 1273. 1274. 1275. 1276. 1277. 1278. 1279. 1280. 1281. 1282. 1283. 1284. 1285. 1286. 1287. 1288. 1289. 1290. 1291. 1292. 1293. 1294. 1295. 1296. 1297. 1298. 1299. 1300. 1301. 1302. 1303. 1304. 1305. 1306. 1307. 1308. 1309. 1310. 1311. 1312. 1313. 1314. 1315. 1316. 1317. 1318. 1319. 1320. 1321. 1322. 1323. 1324. 1325. 1326. 1327. 1328. 1329. 1330. 1331. 1332. 1333. 1334. 1335. 1336. 1337. 1338. 1339. 1340. 1341. 1342. 1343. 1344. 1345. 1346. 1347. 1348. 1349. 1350. 1351. 1352. 1353. 1354. 1355. 1356. 1357. 1358. 1359. 1360. 1361. 1362. 1363. 1364. 1365. 1366. 1367. 1368. 1369. 1370. 1371. 1372. 1373. 1374. 1375. 1376. 1377. 1378. 1379. 1380. 1381. 1382. 1383. 1384. 1385. 1386. 1387. 1388. 1389. 1390. 1391. 1392. 1393. 1394. 1395. 1396. 1397. 1398. 1399. 1400. 1401. 1402. 1403. 1404. 1405. 1406. 1407. 1408. 1409. 1410. 1411. 1412. 1413. 1414. 1415. 1416. 1417. 1418. 1419. 1420. 1421. 1422. 1423. 1424. 1425. 1426. 1427. 1428. 1429. 1430. 1431. 1432. 1433. 1434. 1435. 1436. 1437. 1438. 1439. 1440. 1441. 1442. 1443. 1444. 1445. 1446. 1447. 1448. 1449. 1450. 1451. 1452. 1453. 1454. 1455. 1456. 1457. 1458. 1459. 1460. 1461. 1462. 1463. 1464. 1465. 1466. 1467. 1468. 1469. 1470. 1471. 1472. 1473. 1474. 1475. 1476. 1477. 1478. 1479. 1480. 1481. 1482. 1483. 1484. 1485. 1486. 1487. 1488. 1489. 1490. 1491. 1492. 1493. 1494. 1495. 1496. 1497. 1498. 1499. 1500. 1501. 1502. 1503. 1504. 1505. 1506. 1507. 1508. 1509. 1510. 1511. 1512. 1513. 1514. 1515. 1516. 1517. 1518. 1519. 1520. 1521. 1522. 1523. 1524. 1525. 1526. 1527. 1528. 1529. 1530. 1531. 1532. 1533. 1534. 1535. 1536. 1537. 1538. 1539. 1540. 1541. 1542. 1543. 1544. 1545. 1546. 1547. 1548. 1549. 1550. 1551. 1552. 1553. 1554. 1555. 1556. 1557. 1558. 1559. 1560. 1561. 1562. 1563. 1564. 1565. 1566. 1567. 1568. 1569. 1570. 1571. 1572. 1573. 1574. 1575. 1576. 1577. 1578. 1579. 1580. 1581. 1582. 1583. 1584. 1585. 1586. 1587. 1588. 1589. 1590. 1591. 1592. 1593. 1594. 1595. 1596. 1597. 1598. 1599. 1600. 1601. 1602. 1603. 1604. 1605. 1606. 1607. 1608. 1609. 1610. 1611. 1612. 1613. 1614. 1615. 1616. 1617. 1618. 1619. 1620. 1621. 1622. 1623. 1624. 1625. 1626. 1627. 1628. 1629. 1630. 1631. 1632. 1633. 1634. 1635. 1636. 1637. 1638. 1639. 1640. 1641. 1642. 1643. 1644. 1645. 1646. 1647. 1648. 1649. 1650. 1651. 1652. 1653. 1654. 1655. 1656. 1657. 1658. 1659. 1660. 1661. 1662. 1663. 1664. 1665. 1666. 1667. 1668. 1669. 1670. 1671. 1672. 1673. 1674. 1675. 1676. 1677. 1678. 1679. 1680. 1681. 1682. 1683. 1684. 1685. 1686. 1687. 1688. 1689. 1690. 1691. 1692. 1693. 1694. 1695. 1696. 1697.

[Link flutters back](#)

[illegible]

Save Zofia Priory the whole history of the Priory.

Start right where you left off.

[illegible]

There is a lot of good information here and
I think it is a good idea to have a meeting
with the students and the teachers to discuss
the situation and to see if we can do anything
to help. I think it is a good idea to have a
meeting with the students and the teachers to
discuss the situation and to see if we can do
anything to help.

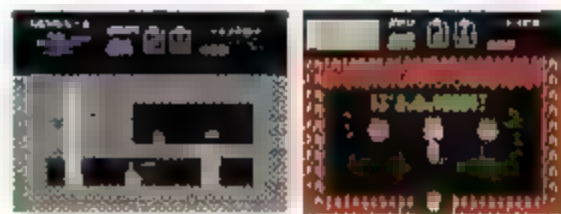
You realize the joke is that the air that we breathe is the factories and factories that are polluting it. It is the irony of air pollution that the factories are the ones that are polluting the air that we breathe.

A name that's solid gold.

[illegible]

WHAT WE SAY NOW

Even 25 years ago The Legend of Zelda was positioned as a groundbreaking epic, and it turned out to be exactly that. The formula has naturally been enhanced and refined—some might even say perfected—over the years, but it's amazing how much of the series' DNA was established with the original game. Even though the sequels are bigger, prettier, and easier to control, there's still something special about setting out into Hyrule for the first time without any tutorials to hold your hand, and just getting the chance to explore and experience a world where surprises are around every corner. There's a reason why The Legend of Zelda is one of the most beloved series of all time, and it all started right here.



EVOLUTION OF A SERIES

Yous can acquire plenty of data on-line.

The World Bank
Life Support Systems
Changshu, China

Don't forget to wash up on
Bosch's!

There are still plenty of cool weapons.

are now three-dimensional and fully extensible

Help: only 2
button: press
30.2x



The figure is placed into individual elements.



4/2/2018
10:31
10:31
10:31
10:31



Work is now being handled

• The firm's work maintains prime-time debtors with almost 100% retention and the Zero Default Score.

April 11: The University of Illinois
as a series of interconnected
and interconnected systems

Issue 11: Premier Ronald Reagan challenges Soviet Premier Mikhail Gorbachev to be a champion for Berlin Wall

2014年 12月 20日

[illegible]

he has... anti
he's... up! the
daytime television



KID ICARUS

WHY IT WAS A BIG DEAL

At the time of Kid Icarus's release, video games tended to stick to a single genre. Super Mario Bros. was a platformer; Gradius was a shooter; Golf was, um, golf. Kid Icarus bucked that trend by featuring multiple styles of gameplay. The game begins as a vertically scrolling

platformer. Eventually you encounter Zelda-style dungeons that lend an adventure element to the festivities. Then there are side-scrolling platform stages and even a shooting stage. Variety is the spice of life, and Kid Icarus has it in spades.

RobotCop is released in theaters.

Full Grown Men release aspende for Destruction.

Five Minutes in the Morning releases the album Bad.

At the time of release, it becomes the top-grossing movie of the year.

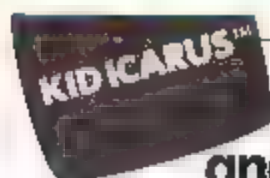
Arlo's Transition album is released in theaters.

The Prince of Darkness is released in theaters.

Star Trek: The Motion Picture makes its television debut.

Actress singer Hilary Duff is born.

WHAT THEY SAID THEN



A scrappy kid and complex play keep you moving fast.

Discover the challenge in another time and another place. Forge and battle the world's first goddess of flight Palutena as well as the villainous creature of the dark, Medusa.

This is one of the most complex and challenging games ever. The game is divided into four levels, two with horizontal action and two with vertical action, each of which has three areas and a fortress—except the last level which doesn't have a fortress, but has other surprises.

In each area, to save the goddess, you fight strange creatures and evil forces. In the Medusa domain, hidden treasures and magic equipment undergo training, reposition, and

In a life-saving hot spring, and visit a hospital to cure wicked spells.

If you survive, you must face the evil Medusa who resides in the sky, awaiting Pit with evil and terrifying tricks.



Continued on p. 64

Sacred Treasure

In the early 1980s, the game was known as Pit's Treasure, and it was a hit. It was the first of the Sacred Treasure series.



Many of the Sacred Treasure games were released in the 1980s.

The game's success was well-documented, and it was a hit. It was the first of the Sacred Treasure series.

Special Weapons

You must also work a much more difficult and complex game. It was a hit. It was the first of the Sacred Treasure series.

The game's success was well-documented, and it was a hit. It was the first of the Sacred Treasure series.

Hint, Hint

And the game, after a short time, was a hit. It was a hit. It was the first of the Sacred Treasure series.

The game's success was well-documented, and it was a hit. It was the first of the Sacred Treasure series.



WHAT WE SAY NOW

Although Kid Icarus is still a pretty great game, it does have a few unpleasant quirks that prevent it from being truly timeless. A backwards difficulty curve makes the game a bit frustrating, and the potential to drop through platforms to your death when ducking during the vertically scrolling stages is a notable design flaw. Despite these issues, the varied gameplay, fantastic soundtrack, and unique theme make Kid Icarus extremely enjoyable, which is probably why hardcore fans spent nearly two decades clamoring for a sequel. Their wishes finally came true earlier this year with the release of the critically acclaimed Kid Icarus: Uprising, which brought the series back to the forefront of gaming.

EVOLUTION OF A SERIES

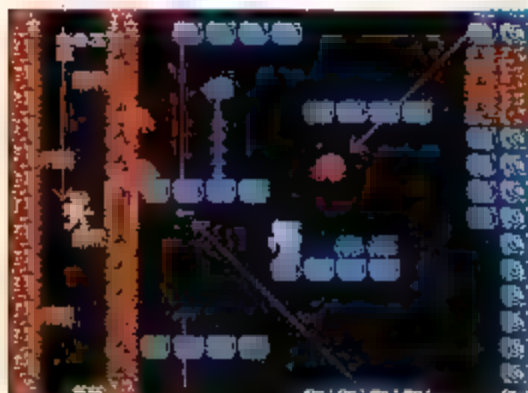
Pit's wings barely work.

The main weapons are slow and airless.

These darn Monocytes just won't leave Pit alone.

The world is far more open, vibrant, and vast.

Pit has a wide array of weapons to choose from.



Pit's wings allow him to fly, with a little help from the goddess Palutena.

Many stages are vertically oriented.

You are free only to the side or straight up.

Touch-screen controls let you aim wherever you want.

Marvel details the adventures of Iron Man in the Web of Spider-Man #31.

America watches on TV as 13-month-old Jessica W. (Lumpus) resurges from a well in Midland, Texas.

Andrew J. Aron, an Orion High School Musical star, is born.

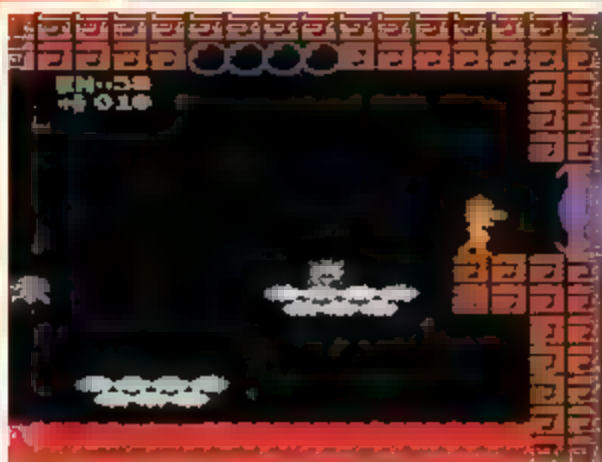
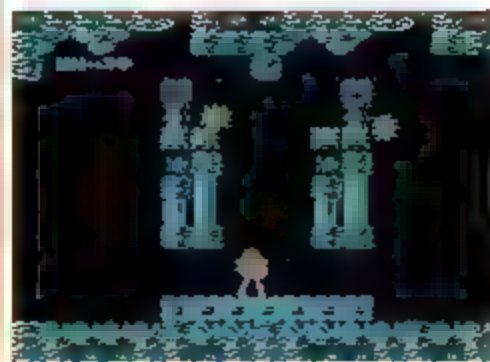
Karen Gillan (Dorothy) is born.

Microsoft releases Windows 2.0.

Director is the 19th Emperor's released in theaters. It goes all to the Academy Award for Best Picture.

The 19th Emperor's released in theaters. It goes all to the Academy Award for Best Picture.



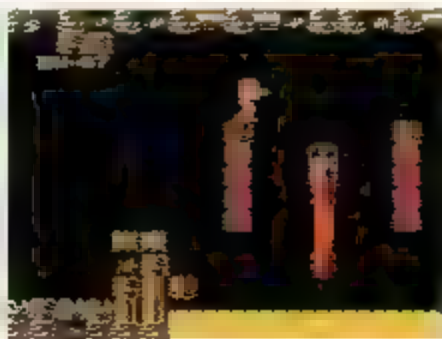
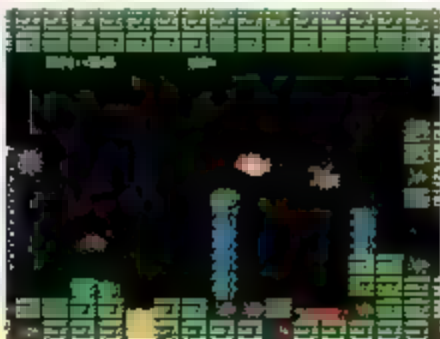
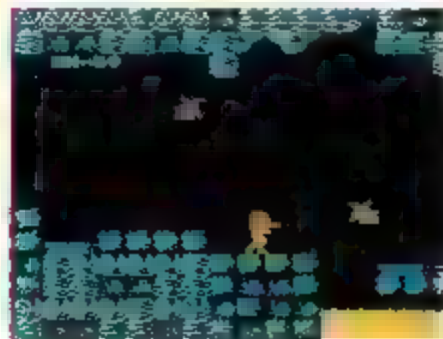


METROID

WHY IT WAS A B.C. DEAL

Part platformer, part shooter, and part adventure, Metroid mixed things up and challenged players' notions of what to expect from console video games. The blending of genres was: I completely unlike

what players saw in The Legend of Zelda (which also seamlessly merged action and exploration), but Metroid carved a niche all its own thanks to its sci-fi setting and butt-kicking bounty-hunter hero.



WHAT THEY SAID THEN

152.8

0.15% 0.15% 0.15%

Fast action, high-tech weapons, and mutant monsters are just part of the challenge.



**Are you
ready for Metroid?**

Domestic trade is expected to be less affected than international trade by the current crisis. The impact of the crisis on domestic trade is expected to be less severe than on international trade. The impact of the crisis on domestic trade is expected to be less severe than on international trade.

But first, we must fight against the forces we have identified as the most powerful in the world, and we must do so with the same determination and courage that we have shown in the past.

There is a difference in the way that the two different types of cells are arranged. In the central nervous system, the cells are arranged in a regular, repeating pattern. In the peripheral nervous system, the cells are arranged in a more irregular pattern.

High-tech arsenal and secret tricks

Գրեք ձեր հայտնի մեծագույն հայտնի անունը
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 4. **የፍቃድ ሰነድ ማስተላለፍ**
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Mapping out your strategy

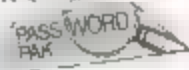
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tusse. Hitt. upphäver de niska riket
- om sebl

[illegible]

Use our own special formulae to make your own special effects. You can make your own special effects. You can make your own special effects. You can make your own special effects.



PassWord Paks

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EVOLUTION OF A SERIES

2006 25 06 01 15

sums can now be added and
perform all kinds of additional moves.

A handy clip makes sure
you don't lose a page.



Strictly a side-on perspective.

Back in 1987, most players didn't know who was making the sale

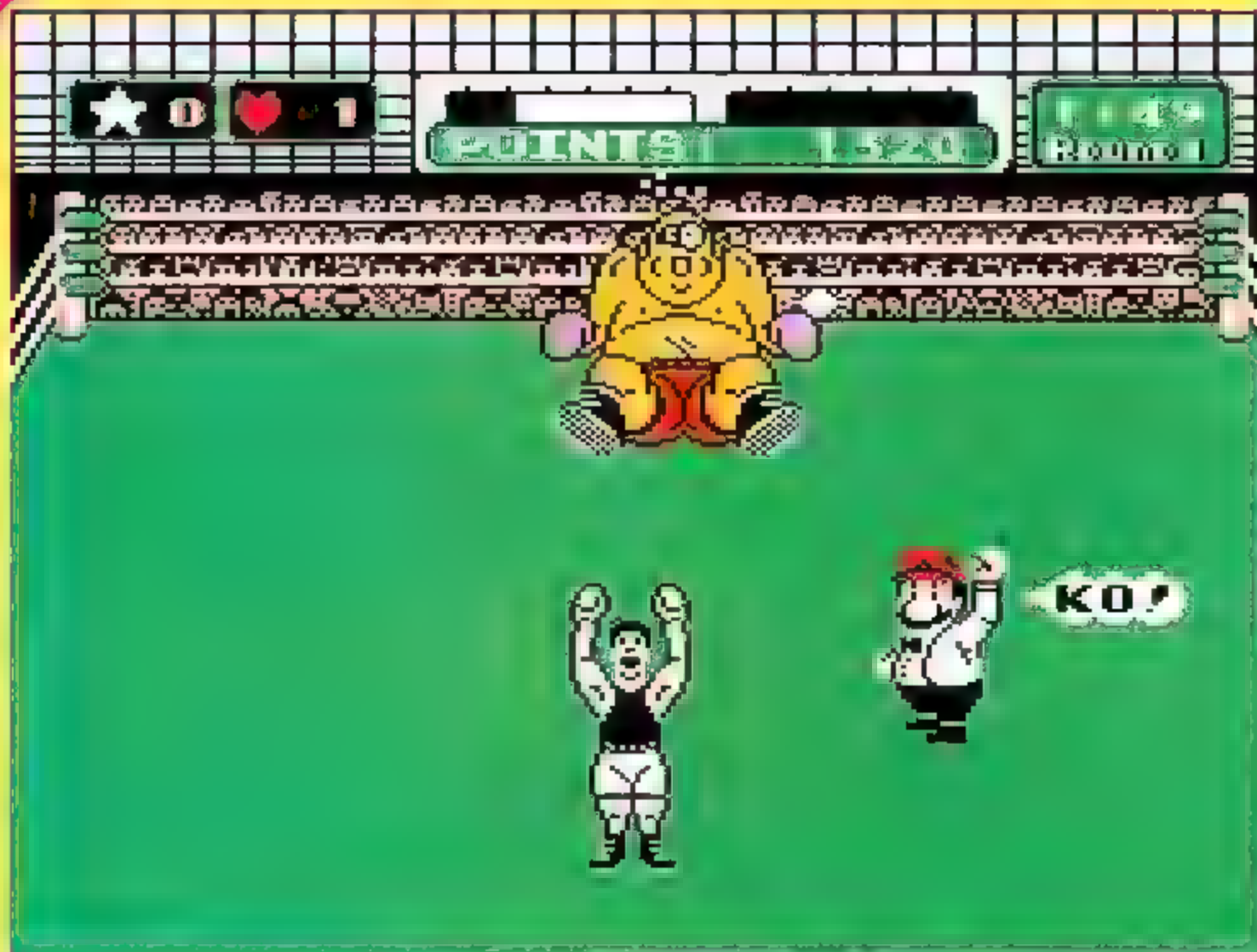


1. **Definition**
 2. **Example**
 3. **Application**
 4. **Conclusion**

**Zoomers get what they
want because they're**

These days everybody knows that Samus is a total hottie.

Summers 8-2007 (changed from 1998)
Summers 8-2007 (changed from 1998)



PUNCH-OUT!!

WHY IT WAS A BIG DEAL

There were a lot of reasons to be excited about Punch-Out!! For one thing, it was an NES adaptation of a hit arcade game. For another, the 1987 version was endorsed by one of the biggest names in sports. Furthermore, there were very few boxing games on the NES, and what could be better than one created by Nintendo itself? When it came to sports games, Punch-Out!! was about as big as it could get.



WHAT THEY SAID THEN

SNEAK PUNCH-OUT!!



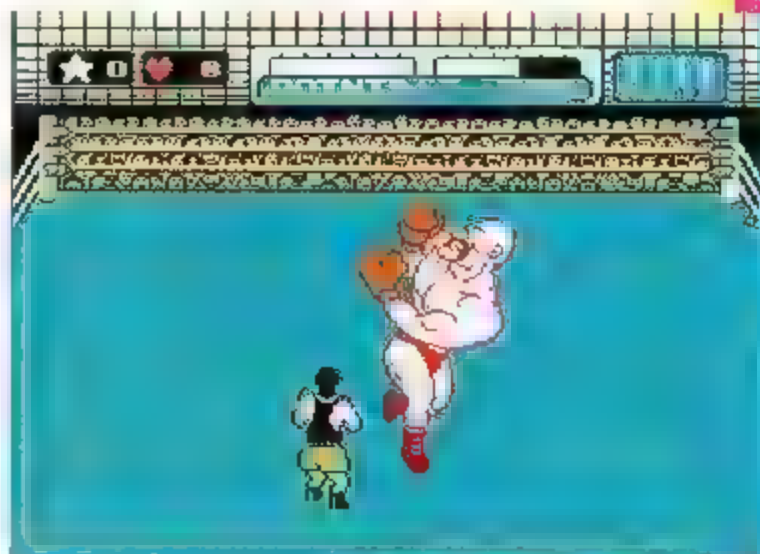
COMING
SOON

You'll be a big fan of the hot new video game Mike Tyson's Punch-Out!!™

Mike Tyson's Punch-Out!! is named after the undisputed heavyweight champion of the world because this is one heavyweight new video game.

It features all the great elements of the arcade hits Punch-Out! and Super Punch-Out! You'll slug it out with five of the original fighters including Flashy Glass Joe, bulky Bald Bull, gritty Mr. Sandman, Super Macho Man, and the fierce Great Tiger.

You'll meet some new masters of the ring, too—a total of six tough characters—all packing really heavy artillery. And you'll have some fancy new moves of your own along with a great special training round.



WHAT WE SAY NOW

Punch-Out!! might hold up better than any other game in this article. Admittedly, it's not a very true-to-life representation of the sport (you can't even move around the ring, for Pete's sake), but that straightforward simplicity really allows you to focus on watching your opponent, learning his tells, and figuring out exactly when to dodge, duck, or counter. Unlike some tenured series, Punch-Out!! releases have been few and far between, and though they've all been fantastic, it's hard to say that the gameplay has really improved all that much—the original NES game was just that darn good. It's no wonder that performers still make Punch-Out!! references on TV or that it was one of the first NES games to hit the Nintendo eShop.

EVOLUTION OF A SERIES



REQUIRED READING

Back in 1987 there was no Nintendo Power. There was no public Internet. If you wanted to be in the know about what Nintendo had on offer, there was only one option: The Official Nintendo Player's Guide. For neophyte gamers, this paperback was a holy tome, packed cover to cover with maps, tips, and information on the NES's biggest hits, from Super Mario Bros. to Punch-Out!! to The Legend of Zelda to Castlevania. Even if you didn't own all of the games covered in the book, it was marvelous to flip through the pages and savor all the wondrous worlds that were but a Game Pak away. There was even a section detailing Zelda II, more than a year before the game hit North America. The guide was just one of many reasons that 1987 was a great year for gaming.



C'mon,
Grab

Slamacow! Finn
and Jake make their
video game debut in
Adventure Time: Hey
Ice King! Why'd You
Steal Our Garbage?!

Your Friends

BY PHIL WITTE

PHIL WITTE: ADVENTURE TIME: HEY ICE KING! WHY'D YOU STEAL OUR GARBAGE?!

NOV

06

ILLUSTRATED BY PHIL WITTE. PHIL WITTE: ADVENTURE TIME: HEY ICE KING! WHY'D YOU STEAL OUR GARBAGE?!



WHETHER YOU'VE SAID "WING RING" OR NOT, YOU KNOW THE SHOW. THE SHIFTING SIDEKICK WHO'S CAPABLE OF BECOMING BIZARRE MONSTERS, AND THE CRYSTAL PENDULANT FOR KIDNAPPING THE TIME. *Adventure Time* seems a natural for the jump from TV to video game, and it's no surprise that those who think so, a "DOP" (Dumb of Personality) like Pendleton Ward at WayForward and the show's creator, to bring the cartoon to life. The game is available on 3DS and Nintendo DS handhelds. We first saw the game a few months back on the Twitter, but details have been scarce since. We talked to WayForward's James Montagna and Matt Bozon (the game's director and designer, respectively) to get the full scoop on this fairly adequately titled *Adventure Time: Hey Ice King! Where's My Car? Or Ga-bage?*

If you're unfamiliar with the animated series, here's the lowdown: It chronicles the adventures of two best friends, Finn (the human) and Jake (the dog) in the magical land of Ooo, using their strength, wits, and Jake's ability to change his size and shape, the pair faces off against a myriad of bizarre enemies, including their most persistent foe, the Ice King. Of course, his frosty Highness isn't really evil; he just doesn't understand that Ooo's many princesses aren't likely to fall in love with him once he's locked them in his dungeon. When they're not battling, Finn and Jake can often be seen in the company of their friends Princess Bubblegum, Marceline the Vampire Queen, and Jake's girlfriend, Lady Rainicorn.

Perhaps the most obvious question about *ATH-KWYSDG* (think: that abbreviation might not work) is what type of game one would

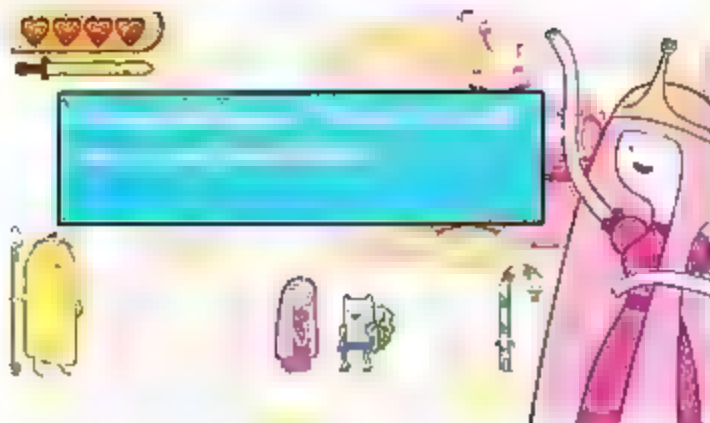
make out of those characters and situations. Although there was talk early on about making a puzzle platformer or a brawler, the decision was ultimately made to stay true to the show's title and create an adventure game. When asked about the game's inspiration, Montagna says, "We looked at classic *Zelda*, *Castlevania*, *Mega Man*, *Metroid*, and other series that have inspired our staff over the years. We decided that something like *Zelda 2: The Adventure of Link* was the common ground. Because of this our top-view areas focus on quests and exploration, and the side view combines combat with platforming."

The game's original storyline is the brainchild of Pendleton Ward, and it's just as irreverent as any given episode of the cartoon. Montagna elaborates, "The idea came from Pen to have the Ice King stealing Finn



(Above) Even giant, crown-wearing enemy worms are no match for a dog with stretchable limbs.





(Above) In true adventure game style, Finn and Jake will occasionally wander into towns to chat with their citizens (or their royal rulers in PB's case).

and Jake's garbage, and the two of them seeking to get it back out of principle. It's pretty much the makings of the best story ever told right? So, we absolutely had to run with it. We've been working with Pen to fill out the rest of what happens on Finn and Jake's journey."

Because Finn and Jake are such buddies, the player will control the two of them together as a single unit. Each one, however, has his own set of attacks. Jake, in particular, adds quite a bit of technique to the gameplay with his unique shape-shifting ability. Montagna explains how Jake's

powers work: "Jake chills out in Finn's backpack, but will pop out to attack enemies in ways that Finn can't. But Jake also uses his powers to help outside of battle. Players will learn new shapes that Jake can transform into. On the Goo world map, Jake can stretch to these forms to help Finn reach new areas. I imagine people might be like, 'Hey, couldn't he just transform into those things anyway?' Over the course of the game, Jake is learning different songs that remind him of what sorts of things he can turn into. If you play the song for him, it'll trigger a spark of inspiration

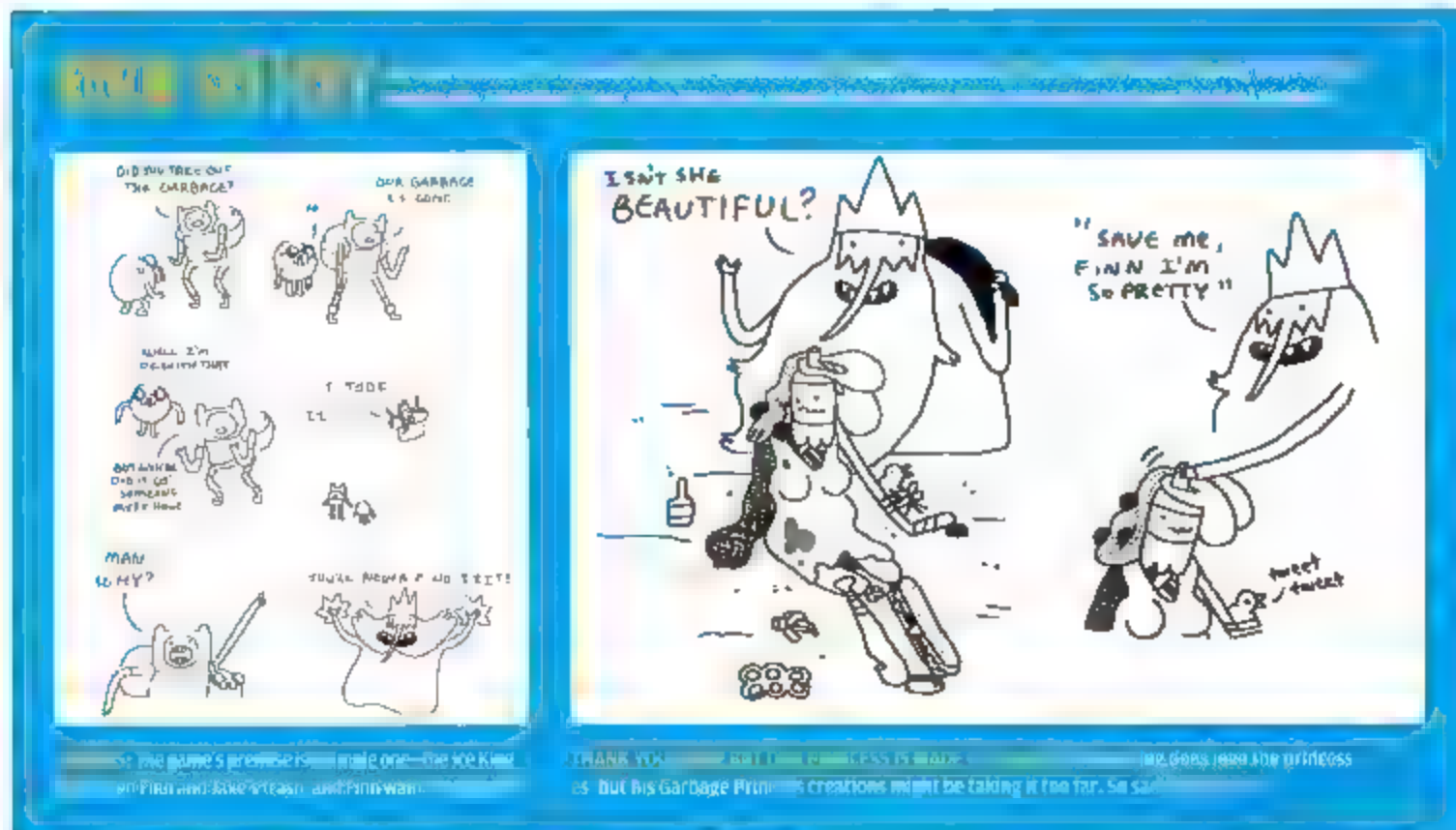


like, 'That's right, could become a boat.'"

While the main action is occurring on the top screen of the N3DS or DS, the lower screen, representing Finn's backpack, will serve a variety of uses. Players will be able to access the duo's individual stats, their inventory, a map of Goo, and the game's unusual health-recovery system. Like many video game

characters, Finn and Jake eat food to recover health, but you can enhance their food with a variety of condiments. Mixing and matching different foods will create new treats, and something that sounds gross in real life could result in a massive HP boost in the game.

Finn and Jake are, of course, the game's stars, but expect to see plenty of the show's secondary





characters make appearances as well. Given the creative talent behind the game, however, it certainly won't be a simple rehash of the show. Montagna assures us, "It seems like almost every episode introduces someone new, so the game will have that going on too! There are some hilarious designs that came from Pen, actually. For instance, we have



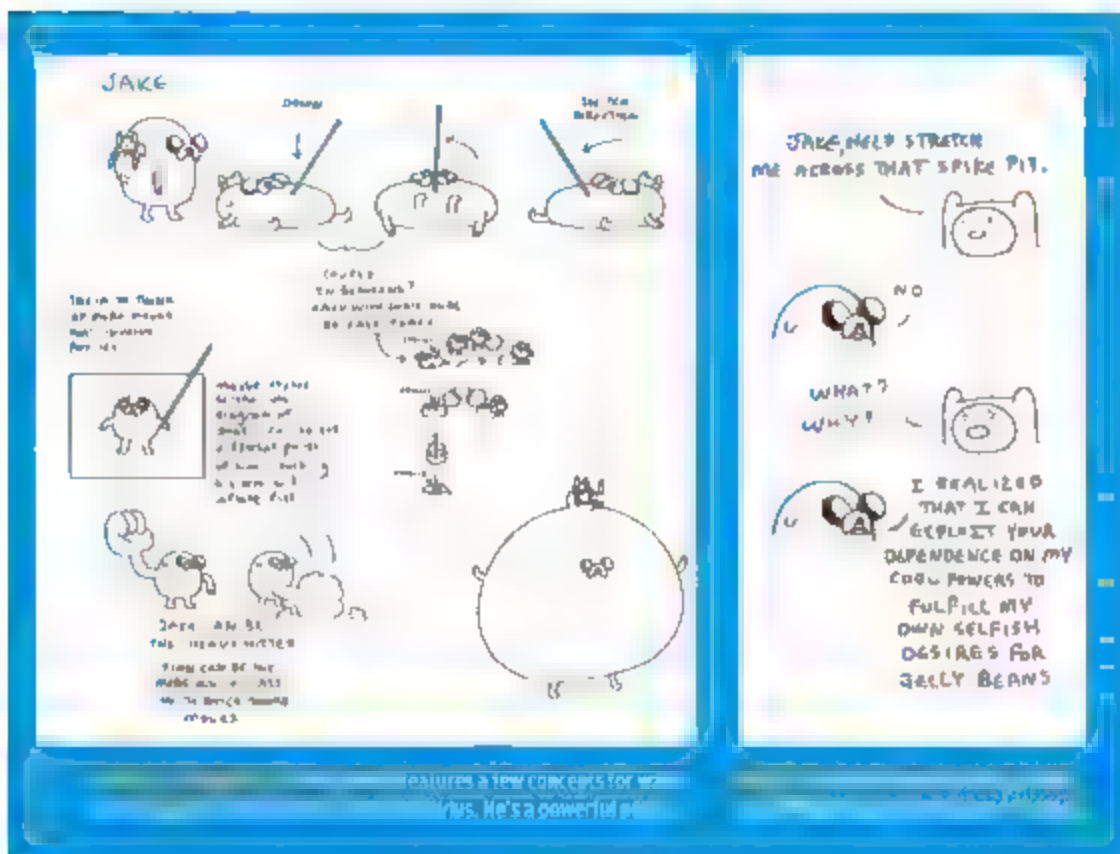
enemies that have been crudely fashioned by the Ice King himself. I don't wanna spoil anything though! I'm really excited about players coming across these things in the game!"

Pendleton Ward has been intimately involved since the start of the project, working on the game's script as well as specific design details. Bozon shares more

about Ward's contributions: "He's a reserved guy on the surface, but quickly jumps in to write dialogue, draw enemies, or ask how our tech works or how his offbeat ideas can be best achieved. He's wise beyond years in managing the creative process in regards to deadlines, design, and the wide variety of personalities that come into play. And he talks just like his characters do, which makes meetings pretty amusing." Montagna continues, "It's cool to have the world's greatest expert on the series available to advise us. He can easily make recommendations like 'Hey, if you need a character that would make a good shopkeeper, use Choose Goose,' or provide ideal alternatives to characters and settings we might suggest. In a lot of ways, it's unprecedented to have the creator of a license be so excited to contribute, and it's safe to say that an immense amount of care is being taken in crafting this game by all parties involved."

And Ward's participation isn't the only factor working in the game's favor. The creative team at WayForward is composed of huge fans of the series, and they are dedicated to making the game as true to the cartoon as possible. Expect plenty of the show's humor and Finn and Jake's trademark banter. The developers are also keen on sneaking in cameos by some of the show's more obscure characters, so *Adventure Time* devotees will have lots to look out for. WayForward knows that fans will be expecting a lot from the game, and they're committed to delivering. Montagna emphasizes, "It's important to us that we meet many of these expectations, but even more important to surprise players with something they wouldn't have imagined." Bozon reiterates the point and gives us additional hope for the future when he says, "With the show being so popular, I'm certain there will be many more *Adventure Time* games to come. We don't want to retell the entire series in game form. That said, we've been reading a lot of wish lists online and we're feeling pretty good about the whole dealio."

After talking with WayForward and seeing the first screenshots of *Hey Ice King! Why'd You Steal Our Garbage?!*, we're feeling pretty good about the whole dealio, too.



features a few concepts for the game. He's a powerful

The Candy King



NINTENDO POWER Are you a video gamer yourself?

PENDLETON WARD Yeah, I consider myself a hardcore gamer

How long have you been playing?

PENDLETON WARD Since [the NES], but only recently have I committed myself to a gamer's lifestyle of buying every game and being in the know of what's happening in the video game industry. I want to make games. I'm really interested in making games, and I think that video games are still an untapped medium for story. I feel like they're still in their infancy as far as how much potential they have with reaching an audience. It's just interactive storytelling. So, I don't know. I'm excited about games; like games a lot.

Do you feel that a game could be a more effective way of storytelling than, say, animation? Or is it perhaps just a different kind? How do you see that?

PENDLETON WARD Hmmm... I don't know about effective, it's just a new way to tell a story that I don't think has been explored as deeply as any other medium. I don't know—there's a certain niche of people who enjoy games, and I feel like games are targeted towards—right now in my head I'm just thinking about shooters and how many shooters there are. But games have so much potential. Now I'm thinking about *Second Life*, where you can create anything in the world and it's completely customizable. I wouldn't want to make *Second Life*, but I feel like *Second Life*—wait, there's no story in *Second Life*. I don't know why I brought that up. [Laughs] I'm just thinking about the potential of games because you can do almost anything. When I was playing the new *Doom*, I was playing at night with the lights off, and with the computer monitor right in my face with my headphones on really loud. In my apartment, I was living with five other guys—this is

where I was in college—and everyone was asleep. I'd be playing, and then I'd be like, "Ahhh!" and then, "I'm sorry!" and wake up everyone and then keep going, "Ahhhhh I'm sorry, everybody!" But what I'm trying to get to is that there's a section of the game where you're just sort of walking through corridors. There wasn't anything attacking you, but every now and then you'd see a silhouette pass across a window, or you'd hear really loud banging sounds, which were creating mood and suspense. What's cool about games is that you're pushing the W key [or controller buttons], which is driving you forward through the story. It makes it even more suspenseful—it puts me on the edge of my seat. I like the idea that the player is moving through a scary movie. I don't know; I'm just rambling now.

What are some of your favorite games?

PENDLETON WARD I like *Minecraft* a lot... I like exploring open worlds, and *Minecraft* had all that. It was also so simple; there's no direction when you first start playing *Minecraft* unless you seek it out online. There aren't instructions; you just have to click buttons until you figure it out. I like that, so I like *Minecraft* a lot. I just started playing *Fez*, the game by Phil Fish, which is an Xbox downloadable. That's a lot

of fun; it's a puzzle game with really cute pixel art. So that's to name a couple. Guess.

What is your involvement in the development of the game?

PENDLETON WARD I wrote a really rough draft of the script for the game, and then James helped me fill in all of the gaps because I left out a bunch of pieces to it. But I'm going to keep working on the script, and I'd like to write all of the dialogue. James, you can help me out too if that's cool.

JAMES MONTAGNA Pen's actually been involved from the start. We worked together to figure out initial gameplay content, and from there he provided story ideas and hilarious enemy designs. Actually, I almost burst out laughing during one of our important phone conferences because I was skimming through the script draft that Pen gave us. There's just great stuff in there.

Are any of the other writers or artists of the show involved with the game, or is it just you?

PENDLETON WARD No, it's just me. I'm taking some personal time to work on it just because I enjoy games so much. Everyone else is just working on the show; no one has time to really take on any extra work.

How are you enjoying working with

WayForward? Were you familiar with their games?

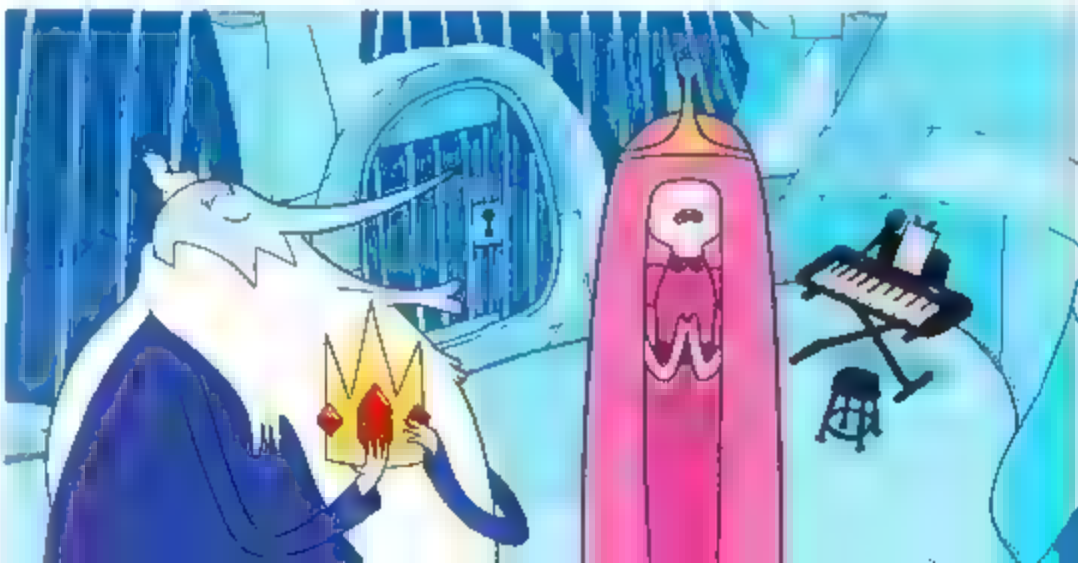
PENDLETON WARD I played *A Boy and His Blob* for Wii, which I really liked a lot. I think they're great, and they've got a lot of original stuff on their roster of games, which I think is really rad. And I think they're also really passionate about their game-making. We really hit it off when I was talking to them for the first time, and I connected with them really well as far as our love of games and what we wanted to put in the game. So I'm stoked.

What do you think fans of the *Adventure Time* series have to look forward to in this game?

JAMES MONTAGNA On *WayForward's* end, we're just a bunch of really obsessive *Adventure Time* fans too. So we're making a point to provide things that the enthusiasts will really flip out over, like fan-favorite characters and references to things they've seen, as well as new surprises.

How is coming up with a storyline for a video game different from coming up with a plot for an episode? Or is there a difference?

PENDLETON WARD Well, I haven't noticed a difference. But *WayForward* is also helping me with the story—they gave me a sort of outline to follow as far as how the



story is going to work and where the characters need to go. Just try to logic in how the characters would react to every situation. I guess I haven't noticed very much of a difference since I'm just writing funny dialogue within the constraints of not adding too many additional assets to the story. Every time I add a new prop or make a change to sell a joke, that's an additional asset. So I'm just working with some of those boundaries and trying to make something that's simple and funny at the same time.

Are you considering this game to be in canon with the series?

PENDLETON WARD Yeah, it's in line with how an episode would play out. So yes, I guess so. It's a pretty simple storyline right now. Ice King sneaks into their house and takes

Pen—a while ago on your Twitter account, you posted a bunch of ideas that you had for an Adventure Time game, such as an Animal Crossing-style game, or something like Monster Hunter or Katamari. Were you able to incorporate any of those ideas into this game, or was that something completely different?

PENDLETON WARD That's something completely different. **JAMES MONTAGNA** I think one of the challenges was paring down so many ideas that we had into something that would work within the context of the game. It's been a lot of fun, but there are just so many great ideas. I think that's one of the awesome things about being able to tap into Pen's creativity as well—we just have so many ideas

a lot of premises that felt like classic and cliché stories. But in the show, we'd just turn them on their head because we would approach them differently. I would just put myself in the shoes of the characters, like I'd put myself in the shoes of Papa Smurf dealing with Gargamel, and imagine what I would actually tell Gargamel. I'd tell Gargamel to please knock it off—you know, you're scaring my friends, and we're going to attack you while you're sleeping if you don't stop it. And you have to sleep sometime. I don't know; I'm just making this up right now, but that's how I approach any story—just put myself in the shoes of the character and see the situation that they're in, and then try to make light of it. Because that's how I live my life—by making light of everything.

Is there one secret about Adventure Time that nobody knows that you would share with us?

PENDLETON WARD Oh my gosh. That nobody knows? Well, the first thing that comes to mind is the Cosmic Owl, who's only seen in a couple episodes. He was in one of the very first episodes, "Prisoners of Love." He's the owl that Ice King sees when he gets knocked out by Finn—Ice King goes to this cosmic place and the owl calls him a sociopath. I don't know if you remember that, but anyway, Cosmic Owl's character design is based off of how the light from the ceiling reflects off the urinal in the men's restroom at Cartoon Network. The light hits the top of the metallic piece on the urinal, and bounces off and then hits the wall, which creates two oval shapes that are interlocking. I always noticed it when I was using the restroom. [Laughs] And then I went into my friend Adam's office and saw a sketch on his table, and he had drawn an owl with those eyes. I was like, "What? That looks really familiar man." And he was like, "Yeah? You recognize it? Yeah?" So then I was like, "That's from the bathroom! Let's put it in an episode."

If you weren't at all constrained by system specs, budget, time, or any other factors that you would normally worry about while developing a video game, what would your dream Adventure Time game be?

PENDLETON WARD Golly. Well, I wouldn't want to make—I think I've said in the past, "Well of course I'd



[Above] Artistic inspiration can come from the strangest places.

make Oblivion!" But I don't think I want to make Oblivion. I would try to make something compact. Like something that was really tightly organized and simplified, if that makes sense. I would just try to make something innovative, and try to reinvent the wheel a little bit. I don't know; I have no idea. Well, if you've ever played Barney's game Barney's Hide & Seek Game for Sega Genesis—was in college and played it and said, "This is amazing!" He's not doing anything; there's no goal. He's just finding things, like he's trying to find a balloon or a trash can. And sometimes he finds a kid hanging out behind a tree, and the kid runs away so he's like, "Woo-hoo!" and he just jumps around. I think that's really fun, and I think I would start there. If I had all of the money in the world, I would start with the Barney game for Sega Genesis.

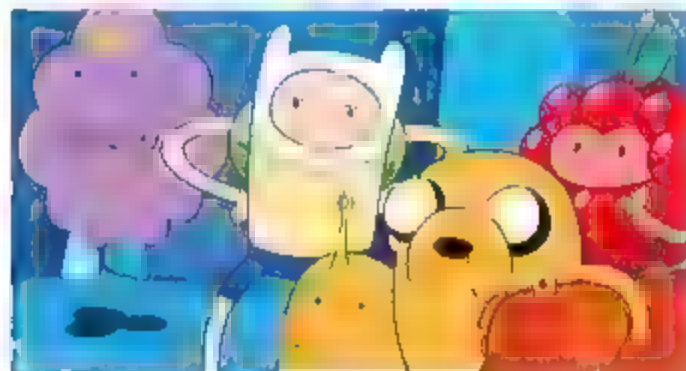
This is probably the one question that the fans are most concerned about: we know this game is coming to the PS and Nintendo 3DS, but is there any chance that it will be ported to BMO at some point?

PENDLETON WARD Yes, absolutely.

NINTENDO POWER That's the important part, really; we want to make sure that Finn and Jake will be able to play the game.

JAMES MONTAGNA We've got our BMO dev kits over here at WayForward. [Laughs]

PENDLETON WARD There are actually functional BMOs online that people have modded out of different handheld devices.



their garbage, and they're like, "What? Give us back our garbage!" And Jake's like, "Well, I don't mind him taking out our garbage," but Finn explains that it's the principle and that he needs to stop coming into their house. So they chase after him, and Ice King has a lot of fun and games with Finn by creating princesses out of garbage, which is a Mario reference. He puts these trash princesses at the end of levels and asks you to save them, but you really just want to hit him because he's being a jerk. [Laughs] So there's a lot of that, and then we'll switch it up with some unexpected twists.

Finn and Jake feel like they transition naturally into the roles of video game heroes, but how do the rest of the show's characters fit into that role?

JAMES MONTAGNA Those characters are there, and they do have roles that are as close as possible to what happens in the show. Actually, some characters may show up in unexpected roles, so you'll have to look forward to that.

How difficult was it to pick and choose ideas like that? As you said, there were so many different ideas that seemed like they would work really well.

JAMES MONTAGNA It was a challenge. Pen had a number of concepts for how he'd like to approach designing an Adventure Time game, and we researched choices for the types of games that we look at and that sort of thing. We kind of worked together to zero in on the experience that we wanted to provide. That took a lot of back and forth and trying different things to see what worked, and we found a common ground in something that's stylistically similar to Zelda—for NES.

How difficult is it to make a video game funny?

PENDLETON WARD Hmm...this is going to sound very egotistical, but it's not very difficult. I'm just writing jokes the way that I know how to do it. I always feel confident that I can make something funny. Every story's been told. I think, And in the beginning of Adventure Time, I was seeing

PLAY BACK

REVISITING THE CLASSICS

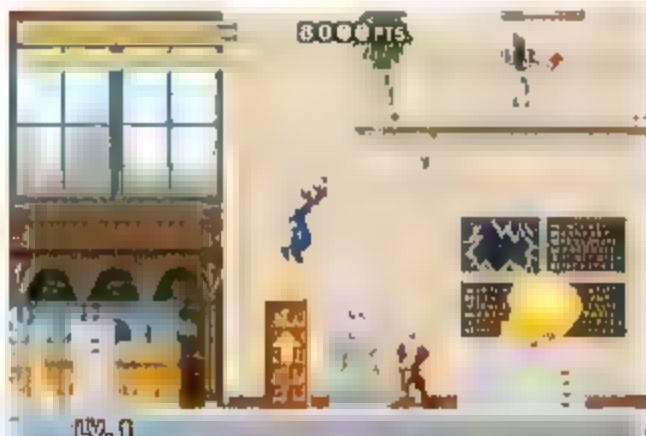
Ninja cops are no match for the power of kabuki!



Developer: LIGHT BOLT ADVANCE
Publisher: KONAMI
Designer: HURDON
Released: APRIL 2003
Price: \$49.99 / \$39.99
Available on: ADVANCE

Ninja Five-O

To serve and protect and slice up bank robbers with a katana



Always bring a grappling hook to a bank in order to reach the random balconies that are placed 20 feet above the floor.

For a game that was released in 2003, *Ninja Five-O* sure feels like it should have come out in 1989. That's not supposed to be a knock against the graphics or gameplay—in fact, it's a compliment of the highest order. At a time when games were striving for cinematic realism, it was a refreshing blast from the past to play a title that involved a government-employed ninja slashing up hijackers on an airplane and fighting a giant fireball-throwing kabuki warrior.

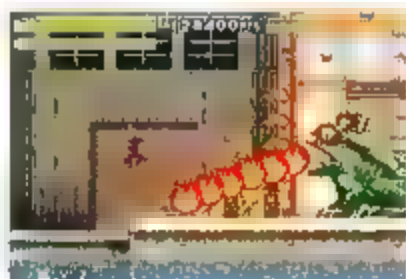
The plot of *Ninja Five-O* is as simple (and ridiculous) as most other games from the B- and 16-bit eras. An evil gang has taken over "the city" and is committing all sorts of crimes. With the normal police force overwhelmed, it's up to Joe Osugi, the precinct's resident ninja, to take command of the situation. Fairly ridiculous,

right? It's one step up from "Are you a bad enough dude to rescue the president?" and we love it for that.

Although not terribly large, the game's stages are nonlinear, forcing you to do a bit of exploration in each of them (minus the boss stages). You must rescue a set number of hostages and track down different colored keys to unlock the many doors throughout each level. To counter the criminal threat, Joe is armed with an unlimited supply of

Joe's most valuable tool, though, and the one that adds an extra bit of technique to the game, is his grappling hook. This device allows you to grab overhead platforms and swing up onto them. Mastering the hook takes a bit of practice, but once you do, it's extremely satisfying to flip up and over an enemy thug who's patrolling a ledge and cut him down from behind.

Given Joe's ninja skills and grappling hook, *Ninja Five-O* plays like a cross between Sega's original *Shinobi* and Capcom's NES classic *Bionic Commando*. It's a remarkably fun game that holds up extremely well today. Unfortunately, the cartridge is also quite rare, making it hard to come by without shelling out a substantial chunk of cash. Still, *Ninja Five-O* is so good that it might just be worth it. —PHIL T.



LAYING DOWN THE LAW

In Europe, *Ninja Five-O* is known as *Ninja Cop*, a title that really reflects the game's late-'80s charm. When it comes to video game police officers, Joe Osugi is certainly one of the best. So here are a few more of our favorites:



FAKE MAN
Debuted in
Mega Man
(Wii)
Don't

Fake Man here is a villainous police robot designed by Dr. Wily in order to frame Mega Man.



PHOENIX WRIGHT
Debuted in
Phoenix Wright: Ace Attorney
(Nintendo DS)

Phoenix Wright is a prosecutor who quits the police force when her superiors refuse to do anything about the growing crime wave. She hits the streets with her partner.



MILES EDGEWORTH
Debuted in
Phoenix Wright: Ace Attorney
(Nintendo DS)

This jovial (and somewhat bumbling) homicide detective is always ready to lend an investigative hand to Phoenix Wright and Miles Edgeworth.

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Juri
Lakeside, CA



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REVIEWS

IN THIS
SECTION



Experience your favorite Final Fantasy tunes in a new way in Theatrhythm Final Fantasy for Nintendo 3DS.



Melodies of Life

THEATRHYTHM FINAL FANTASY

8.0 The amount of enjoyment you get out of *Theatrhythm Final Fantasy* will probably correlate directly to how big a fan you are of the *Final Fantasy* series. If you have fond memories of Celes putting on the show of a lifetime at the opera, Cloud and company facing off against Sephiroth, Squall and Rinoa dancing the night away at a school social, or Vaan and Penelo wandering the Giza Plains outside of Rabanastre, there's little that needs to be said—this celebration of *Final Fantasy*'s Japanese 25th anniversary is a must-have. On the other hand, if *Final Fantasy* isn't really your thing, but you're a fan of rhythm games...well, there's a lot to like here, too.

The game's biggest strength is arguably its music. The first 13 mainline *Final Fantasy* games are featured from the get-go, allowing

you to enjoy interactive versions of some of the finest music in RPG history, from the timeless "Main Theme" of the original *Final Fantasy* to "Battle with the Four Fiends" from *FFIX* to "Suteki Da Ne" from *FFX*, all presented in their original glory. Naturally, a few choices are questionable (the jackhammer "Midgar Highroad" from

FFX made the cut, but "Not Alone" from *FF X*—which seems perfect for a rhythm game—did not), and the low-fi 8-bit sounds of the early games might not please some players' eardrums, but overall it's a fantastic collection of tunes.

Theatrhythm also succeeds through plenty of variety. Each *Final Fantasy* game is represented by a field, a battle, and an event track, along with intro and ending

songs that are essentially simplified bonus levels), and each type of tune features a different style of gameplay. The action always comes down to fun, traditional rhythm-game play mechanics: tapping, sliding, dragging, and pressing on the touch screen as visual cues overlap an indicator—but the differences between the three types of songs (which primarily relate to the

number of rows of cues and the positioning of the timing indicator) keep things from becoming repetitive.

The difficulty curve is smooth enough that anyone rhythmically inclined or not should be able to play through the game and see the ending with relative ease—the trick lies in maximizing the score and nailing every beat with a perfectly timed "critical hit." But once you've conquered each set on its default difficulty, there are loads of





opportunities for players who want more of a challenge. Unlockable "expert" and "ultimate" versions of each tune really ratchet up the pacing and intensity: it's in these later, optional portions of the game that rhythm-game enthusiasts will really be able to have a blast and show their stuff. This is doubly true for the tough-as-nails Dark Note mixes, which pair up field and battle tunes so you can experience them in new, rewarding, and often viciously difficult ways.

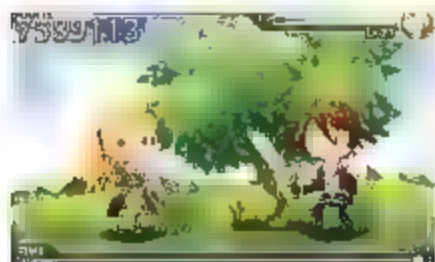
Hardcore FF supporters in the meantime will get to enjoy all the accoutrements that make Theatrhythm much more than



a typical music game. You can choose a party of four characters from a stable of Final Fantasy stars (including several unlockables), equip items, level up by earning experience points, and more. All of this is fairly transparent and easily ignorable if you want to focus on just the core gameplay, but if you'd like to maximize the experience

and tilt the odds in your favor to overcome the game's greatest challenges, it's a nice addition. Of course, there's plenty of bonus content to obtain, too.

As good and deep as the game is, however,



Banding Together

One of the rhythm Final Fantasy's more intriguing features is its multiplayer. It shows up in the game as a feature that the game's challenging Dark Notes is a team with a shared rhythm. The sounds are especially since the game is a rhythm game. It's not anything special. Even though you're playing the same Dark Note as your friends, each player tackles the tracks separately, eliminating any feeling of unity. To be honest, you might as well be playing separate games. On the other hand, the ability to trade Dark Notes via StreetPass is a worthy consolation.

I do have a few complaints. The video footage that's shown during the event stages hasn't been localized for North America, causing the scenes—specifically those from the 8- and 16-bit titles—to lose some of their impact and the game occasionally had trouble recognizing some direction-specific stylus swipes. And although Theatrhythm's replay value is commendable, the time investment required to see everything in the game borders on insane. Fortunately, these are

pretty minor issues that hardly detract from the experience.

Overall, Theatrhythm Final Fantasy is an excellent effort thanks to an amazing soundtrack, solid gameplay, charming visuals, and an appropriately generous helping of nostalgia. If you like Final Fantasy or music games, Theatrhythm won't disappoint.

CHRIS H.

NOTES PUBLISHER: SQUARE ENIX
DEVELOPER: INDIESZERO
ESRB: EVERYONE 10+

WRITERS' BLOCK

WHAT ANNOUNCES
WII U GAME ARE
YOU MOST EXCITED
ABOUT?



JUSTIN CHEN

I'm a huge fan of zombie-related games, movies, and TV shows.

I can't wait to dispatch the undead in *ZombiU*.



CAMRUS LIPPMAN

This is tough. I'm a huge fan of *Pikmin 3* for when I'm playing by myself.

Lonesome and *Rayman Legends* for when friends are around.



PHIL WEISMAN

The *Call of Duty* City: Undercover made that game look like all sorts of fun.

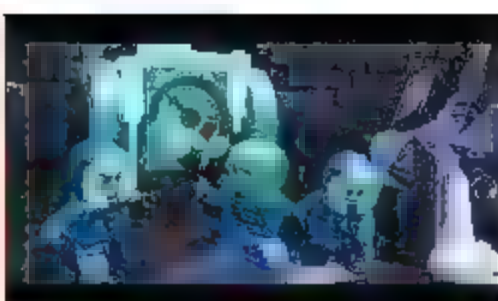
I'm looking forward to playing a non-licensed LEGO game (and I hope they eventually create a game based on LEGO's Space theme).



STEVE MARGOLIN

Justin stole my thunder, but nonetheless have to go with *ZombiU*.

Of all the Wii U games I played at E3, that was the one that best showcased what makes



Block Buster

LEGO BATMAN 2: DC SUPER HEROES

7.0 The most exciting aspect of LEGO Batman 2 is, of course, the ability to play as multiple heroes from the DC universe. One of the problems with the original LEGO Batman game was the fact that equipping Batman and Robin with a variety of different suits (each with its own unique abilities) wasn't as exciting as using a new character. Unlocking a stable of superpowered allies in this second outing adds a great amount of variety to the proceedings. It's especially fun playing as the insanely over-

powered Superman.

Added characters aside, the gameplay is pretty much the same thing that we've seen time and again in the LEGO games, however. The simple action and light puzzle solving is still enjoyable, but some of the stages do drag on a bit too long—not necessarily a good thing for a portable game. A noticeable improvement from the previous LEGO titles for N3DS is the presence of two playable characters on the screen at once. In the first game your partner was always waiting offscreen, but now

he follows along next to you. It may seem like a small detail, but it helps this game feel more like its console big brother.

One slightly controversial aspect of LEGO Batman 2 is the addition of voices during the previously pantomimed cinema sequences. Happily, the voice acting works and it helps give the characters more life. The presence of Clancy Brown (who played Lex Luthor in the *Justice League* cartoon) certainly helps the dialogue feel more legitimate. The soundtrack provides further authenticity, lifting classic themes from the Batman and Superman films.

LEGO Batman 2 certainly doesn't innovate, but had fun seeing what stages and superheroes I could unlock next. **PHIL T.**

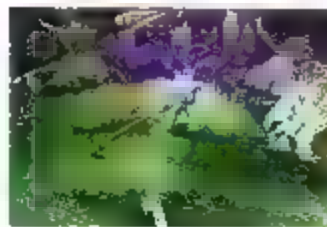
ESRB: EVERYONE 10+

Off Target

Brave: The Video Game

5.0 Brave: The Video Game, based on Pixar's latest opus, has you assuming the role of fiery-haired princess Merida, who embarks on a voyage to purge an evil corruptive force from a mythical version of Scotland.

To accomplish this task, you must jump on platforms, solve puzzles, and shoot arrows at enemies. That last one is something you do a lot throughout this adventure. The motion-controlled melee combat is flawed, so the most effective way



to defeat baddies is by playing the game like a twin-stick shooter—albeit a twin-stick shooter with sometimes-temperamental auto aim. Swapping between four elements (fire, ice, wind, and earth), with which to imbue your arrows does add a layer of strategy to battles, but ultimately the combat—like almost every other facet of this game—is rather lackluster.

JUSTIN C.

ESRB: EVERYONE 10+

This is **Richard**. He knows it's his job to teach his son what this whole gaming thing is about. The age rating helps him **pick the right games**, but being a good dad means he always wants to know more.

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Lafayette, IN



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Heroic Effort

HEROES OF RUIN

7.0 Perhaps it's because of the relatively recent release of *Diablo II* for PC, but I've found myself craving a loot-based action-RPG lately. It's fortunate for me that Square Enix and N-Space have had one called *Heroes of Ruin* in the works for a while (we first started talking about this title in Vol. 268). Even better, this game does a mostly good job of bringing the *Diablo*-style experience to the Nintendo 3DS system. In the world of *Veil*, there are creatures called Ruinords, one

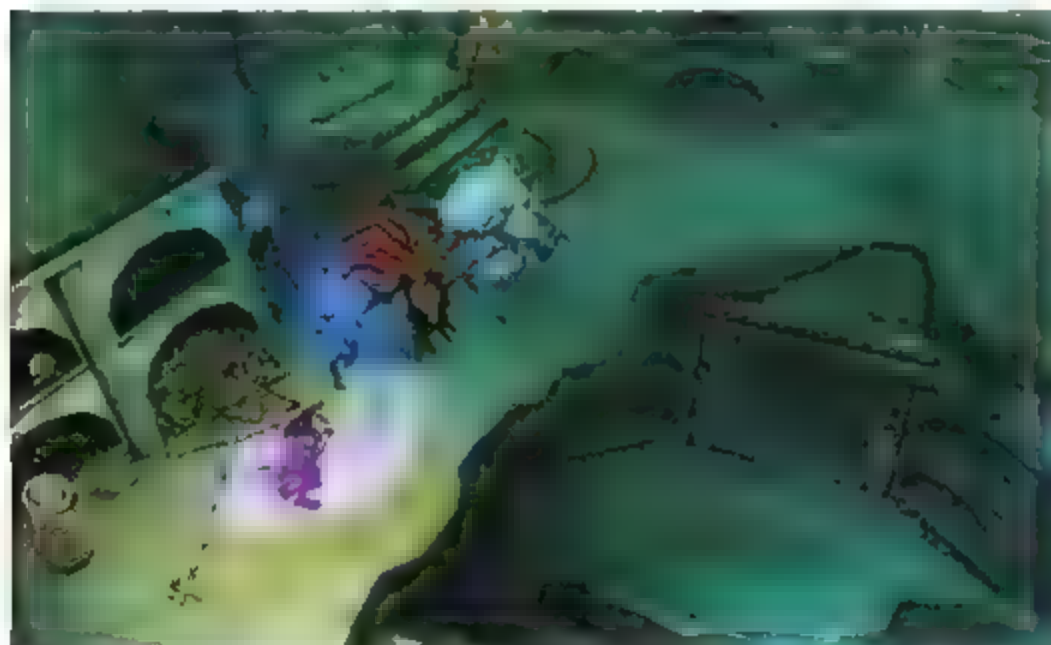
of which is the sphinx Ataxax, who has fallen under a curse. It's up to you—assuming the role of a sword-brandishing Vindicator, a pistol-packing Gunslinger, a magic-wielding Architect, or a fist-swinging Savage—to voyage to Ataxax's city of Nexis and attempt to cure the Ruinlord. Despite having some (rather obvious) twists as the story reaches its conclusion, the narrative isn't particularly compelling. But it doesn't really have to be: This game is all about dispatching foes, leveling up, and acquiring loot so that you can defeat even stronger adversaries and continue the cycle. Unfortunately, the cycle can grow wearisome due in part to the seem-

ingly endless quantity of enemies. The game sometimes throws at you. This is great for earning experience sure, but it makes exploring dungeons a slog. The medium can be offset somewhat by the up-to-four-player drop-in/drop-out co-op (though, and we didn't experience any notable lag issues when testing both the local wireless and online multiplayer). The same can't be said of the game's late-November release, however, as it's less than solid online or off, single-player or multiplayer, especially when the 3D effect is enabled.

The main thing that surprised me about *Heroes of Ruin* was just how short the adventure is. After I beat the game the first time, the

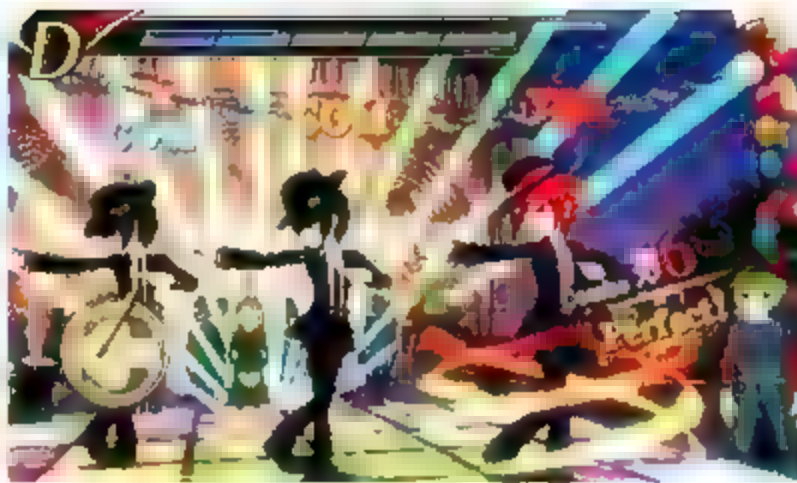
clock said it had taken me under six hours. Perhaps that's for the best, though, as this game fares much better when played in short bursts: a dungeon or two at a time, which is good pacing for a handheld title. Besides, Square Enix has ambitious postrelease plans, and has pledged to support the game for at least a year by offering challenges and items via SpotPass, as well as quests via the *Heroes of Ruin* community website. Those features were not available at press time, but assuming Square Enix follows through with its promise, you don't have to be overly concerned about getting your money's worth should you decide to purchase this title. —JUSTIN C.

PRODUCED BY SQUARE ENIX
DEVELOPED BY N-SPACE
TEEN



The multiplayer makes this game exponentially more enjoyable.





Smooth Criminal

RHYTHM THIEF & THE EMPEROR'S TREASURE

8.0 *Rhythm Thief reminds me why I've been a Sega fan for more than 20 years. Like so much of the company's output during the Saturn and Dreamcast days especially, it's earnest, the product of an obviously passionate creative team that somehow convinced the suits to*

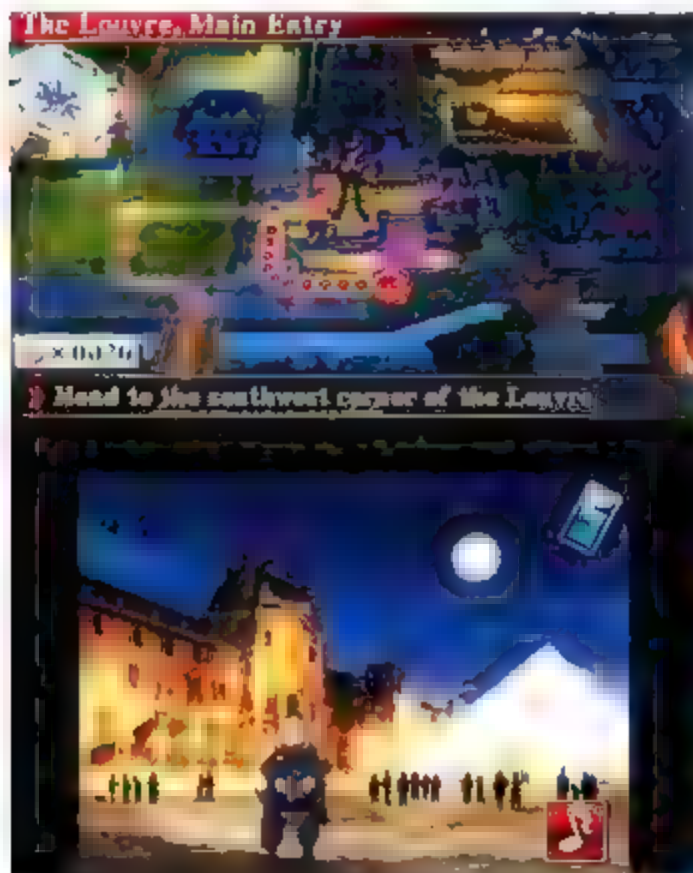
leave them alone and let them realize their wonderfully quirky vision. Too few people are likely to appreciate it (another Sega hallmark, sadly), but that doesn't make the endeavor less worthwhile for those who do.

That's not to say the game's without flaws. Fair to omit. But you're the kind of player who shares in its

developers' experimental spirit (and chances are good if your curiosity is piqued enough to read this review).

can almost guarantee that Rhythm Thief will bring a smile to your face. Perhaps best described as a musical caper—it stars a young art thief named Raphael—better known to his fellow Parisians as Phantom R—who's father recently went missing under mysterious circumstances. Raphael is determined to get to the bottom of his old man's disappearance, but those efforts lead him to cross paths with an apparently back-from-the-dead (and understandably cranky) Napoleon Bonaparte. The ensuing hijinks unfold as a wide variety of rhythm-based activities. Raphael sneaks into the Louvre, flees a roller-skate police brigade, engages in fisticuffs with a butler, poses as a short-order cook, and much, much more—all to the beat of some pretty infectious tunes.

The gameplay itself is pretty standard genre fare, consisting primarily





of button taps and touch screen swipes. But the way it's packaged makes a big difference. The variety of tasks helps to keep things fresh, the art is shaded a bit, it has a cartoonish charm, and the animation is fantastic. Plus, Phantom R is a good protagonist. Like the Pink Panther meets Midge Jackson. And fellow Sega fans will get a kick out of frequent nods to the company's history, including stages

inspired by Samba de Amigo and Space Channel 5. Of course, a rhythm game is only as good as its music, and in that regard Rhythm Thief excels. The vast majority of the soundtrack consists of phenomenal original tracks that fit the caper theme like a glove and really help sell the idea that this is a different kind of game. A couple of stage music instrumental arrangements while you simulate playing the violin as Raphaél's friend Marie. Those ended up being some of my favorite and made me realize how awesome a violin hero game would be. But it digress.

Bridging the musical festivities are adventure



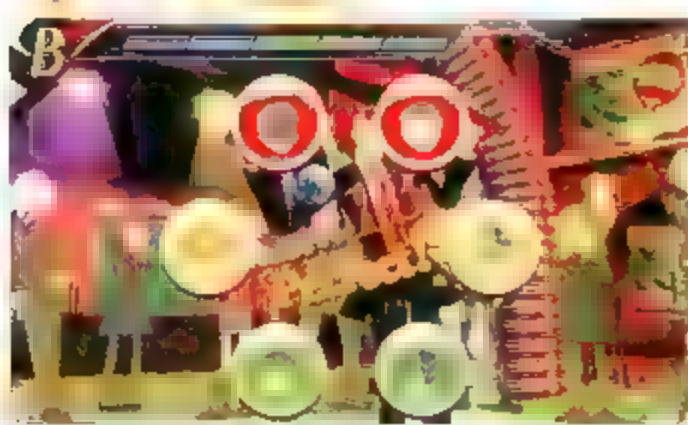
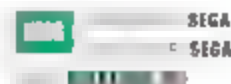
elements vaguely reminiscent of Professor Layton. You explore Paris, chat with its citizens, and solve the occasional sound-based puzzle. The brain teasers aren't in the same league as Layton's, some involve little more than a word or two, but they're obviously not the main attraction here. Their job is to break the playing a bit, and they do accomplish that task, for sure. Besides, the game benefits from a grey market in another way: as your travels lead to a number of Paris landmarks, quite a few historical facts manage to sneak their way into conversation. The next time you visit France's capital, that knowledge may earn you looks of awe and disdain. "We kid the French!"

Despite the real-world setting, Rhythm Thief's story is pretty silly, mostly in a good way. It's often humorous, at times touching, and bolstered by some song writing. Major events are portrayed through gorgeous stereoscopic 3D cut scenes, which combine cel animation with CG components to stunning effect. I'm honestly sort of amazed that a game this niche had the budget for such lavishly produced cinematics. It's also fully voiced, though that aspect impresses less regularly. The performance for Raphaél is particularly inconsistent, and some of the French accents border on ridiculous.

Perhaps my biggest gripe, however, is the way scoring works during rhythm stages. Your performance never increases or decreases based on hitting the beats on time, and the penalty for screwing up some times seems overly harsh. Many of the stages are quite long, and on more than a handful of occasions, I'd have a perfect run, only to miss a few notes and have to restart. The difficulty can amp up quite a bit towards the later parts of a song, and it's tough to get the hang of those bits when failure comes so quickly.

Fortunately, most of the stages are so much fun that they mitigate the frustration. And with more than 50 of them, all Rhythm Thief is pretty much a game of it's own kind. Hardcore enthusiasts can spend upwards of 10 hours finishing the main story mode, which includes multiple epilogues that you unlock via optional tasks.

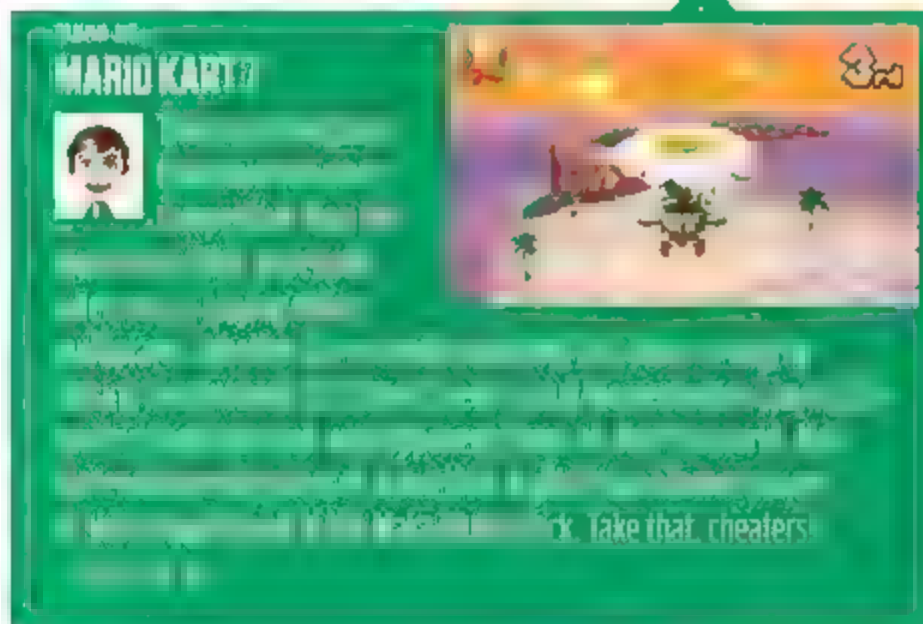
Given Sega's recent financial woes and drastic restructuring, it's impossible to know how many more of these the company has in it. I guess all we can do is enjoy them while they last. —STEVE T



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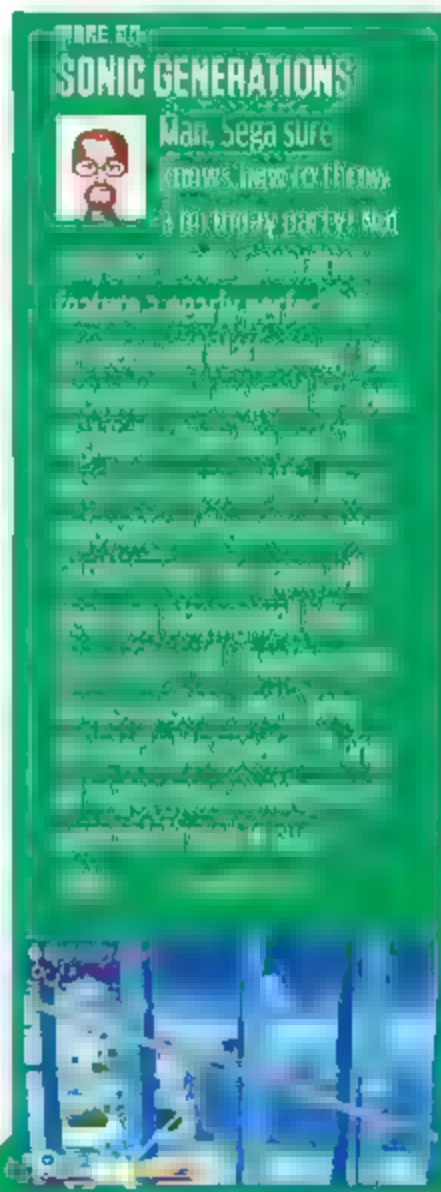
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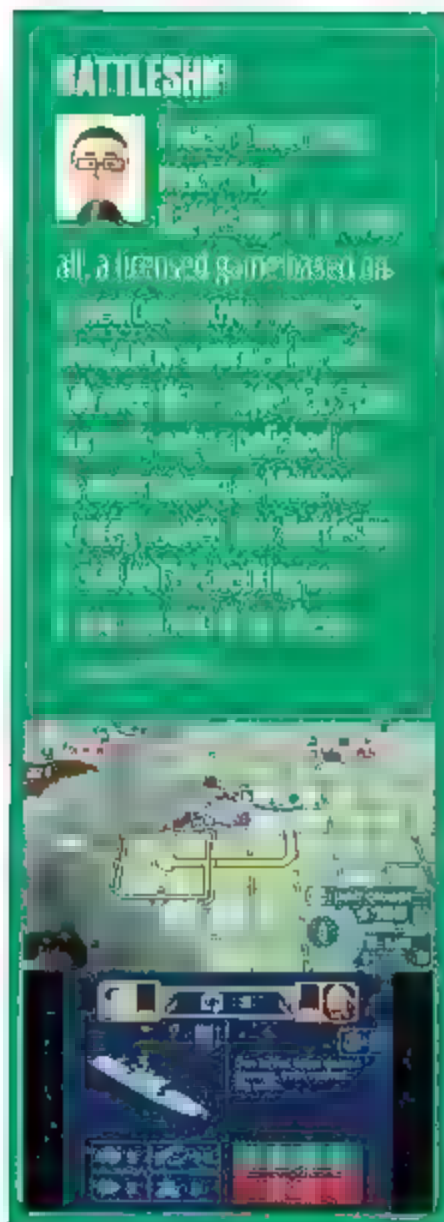


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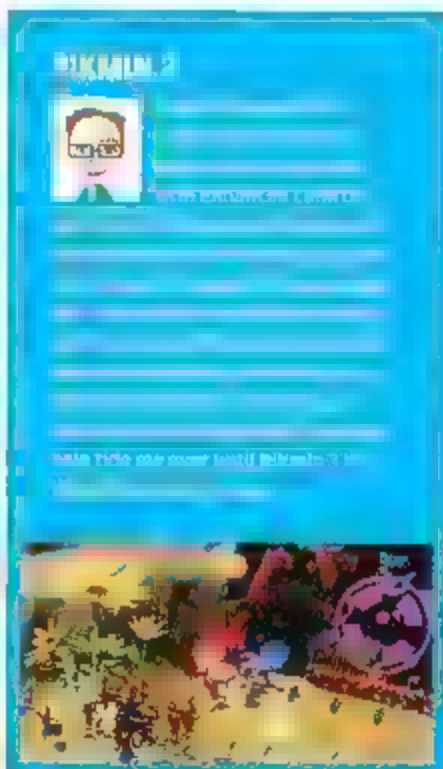


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| Rhythm Heaven Fever | 8.0 | Nintendo | 276 | E |
| Rune Factory: Tides of Destiny | 8.0 | Natsume | 272 | E10+ |
| Skylanders: Spyro's Adventure | 7.0 | Activision | 273 | E10+ |
| Spider-Man: Edge of Time | 7.0 | Activision | 273 | T |
| Super Mario All-Stars | 9.0 | Nintendo | 263 | E |
| Transformers: Dark of the Moon—Stealth Force Edition | 3.0 | Activision | 270 | E10+ |
| TRON: Evolution—Battle Grids | 6.5 | Disney | 263 | E10+ |
| Worms: Battle Islands | 7.0 | THQ | 264 | E10+ |
| WWE 12 | 6.5 | THQ | 274 | T |
| X-Men Destiny | 2.5 | Activision | 273 | T |
| Xenoblade Chronicles | 9.0 | Nintendo | 277 | T |

| Nintendo DS | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----|-----------|-----|------|
| Aliens: Infestation | 8.0 | Sega | 272 | T |
| ATV Wild Ride | 7.0 | Destineer | 264 | E |
| Bejeweled 3 | 8.5 | PopCap | 274 | E |
| Camping Mama: Outdoor Adventures | 5.0 | Majesco | 271 | E |
| Captain America: Super Soldier | 3.5 | Sega | 270 | E10+ |
| de Blob 2 | 8.0 | THQ | 265 | E |
| Dragon Quest: V—Realms of Revelation | 7.5 | Nintendo | 265 | T |
| Dragon Quest Monsters: Joker 2 | 7.5 | Nintendo | 271 | E |
| Fossil Fighters: Champions | 8.0 | Nintendo | 273 | E |

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|---------------------------------------|-----|--------------|-----|------|
| Ghost Trick: Phantom Detective | 9.0 | Capcom | 263 | T |
| Giana Sisters DS | 9.0 | Destineer | 265 | E |
| Green Lantern: Rise of the Manhunters | 3.5 | Warner Bros. | 270 | E10+ |



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|---|-----|-------------|-----|------|
| Harvest Moon: The Tale of Two Towns DS | 8.0 | Natsume | 272 | E |
| Kingdom Hearts Re: coded | 8.0 | Square Enix | 263 | E10+ |
| Kirby Mass Attack | 8.0 | Nintendo | 271 | E |
| Maruko Shippuden: Shinobi Rumble | 6.0 | Tomy | 264 | T |
| Plants vs. Zombies | 9.0 | PopCap | 264 | E10+ |
| Pokemon Conquest | 9.0 | Nintendo | 279 | E |
| Professor Layton and the Last Specter | 8.5 | Nintendo | 272 | E10+ |
| Shin Megami Tensei: Devil Survivor 2 | 8.0 | Atlus | 276 | T |
| Solatorobo: Red the Hunter | 9.0 | Xseed | 271 | E10+ |
| Spider-Man: Edge of Time | 5.0 | Activision | 273 | E10+ |
| Transformers: Dark of the Moon—Autobots/Decepticons | 3.0 | Activision | 270 | E10+ |
| TRON: Evolution | 6.5 | Disney | 263 | E10+ |
| X-Men Destiny | 2.0 | Activision | 273 | E10+ |

COMMUNITY



RANDOM

A Real-Life Tingle

In the skilled-map-maker sense, you understand

BILL MUDRON became a Nintendo fan when, at age 12, he played *The Legend of Zelda* for the first time—at a friend's sleepover. The stack of hand-drawn maps that his friend and his friend's father had sketched out on graph paper as they worked

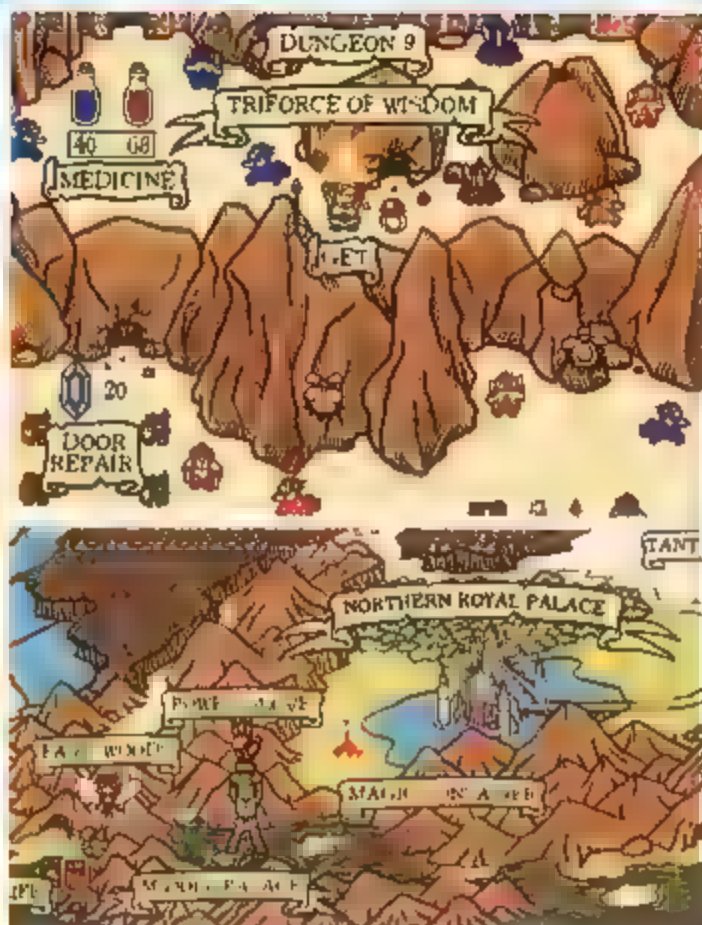
their way through the game mesmerized him. As he puts it, "Seeing that stack of maps and clues was the kid equivalent of taking a peek at R.F. Scott's journal from his trip to the South Pole. It was then that he realized video games could "be

an art form unto themselves." Even before he discovered his love of Nintendo games, however, Mudron developed a passion for art. He began drawing from the moment he could hold a crayon, and it's only natural that these two passions

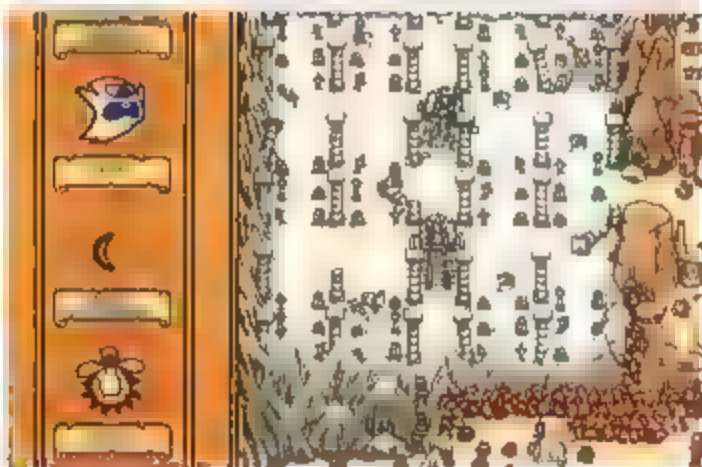
would overlap.

Mudron spent much of his childhood honing his art skills by copying maps and illustrations from video game magazines, and now, at age 36, he has taken his boyhood doodles to the next level with the creation of a gorgeous pair of maps that show off the landscape of Hyrule (from *The Legend of Zelda* series) and the Mushroom Kingdom (from the *Mario* series).

The Hyrule map was the first of the two. The inspiration for the project came when Mudron wanted to draw something to commemorate *The Legend of*



[Above] Finding yourself lost in Hyrule? Need another Heart Container? A close look at Mudron's map reveals all of the land's treasures and places.



Zelda's 25th anniversary in 2011 he describes the creative process thusly: "I couldn't think of an idea that encapsulated what I loved so much about the first game. Eventually I got to thinking about that sleepover where I first saw Legend of Zelda and my friend's box full of hand-drawn maps of Hyrule and so I thought, why not just do a 'but bigger'?" At 24"-16" the final product was indeed big, and as it encompasses the

own worlds of both The Legend of Zelda and Zelda: The Adventure of Link, complete with locations of all enemies and hidden items, it's functional, too. Keen eyes will also notice The Wind Waker's Great Sea lurking in the upper right corner of the map.

Designing the map was a two-month process that consumed hundreds of man-hours. Mudron spent the first month simply designing the map. Not until the

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PHOTOGRAPH FROM CONNOR B.



PHOTOGRAPH FROM FLIPSTAR



PHOTOGRAPH FROM TOMMIE R.

ABOVE AND BEYOND

...the first month simply designing the map. Not until the

second month was he able to begin drawing, coloring, and labeling the piece. As for the tools he used, Mudron explains, "I work exclusively on a Cintiq drawing tablet with a copy of Photoshop. That lets me assemble bits of maps and in-game screenshots from all over the Web into a giant digital image, which I then use as the foundation of the map.

So how does one follow up such an ambitious undertaking? For a Nintendo fan, the next logical project would be a tribute to the beloved Mario series. Of course, the exploration-heavy Zelda titles have clearly defined maps, but how does one go about melding multiple platform games together to create a proper representation of the Mushroom Kingdom? This

challenge is something Mudron welcomes. "My favorite part of drawing a map is trying to figure out how all the different pieces of [the game world (or worlds)] fit together. For the Mushroom Kingdom map, it took me weeks just to figure out how to arrange the world of Super Mario Bros. with the world of Super Mario Bros. 3. I eventually decided to

have them encircle each other like a small donut nested inside a larger donut." Not content to stop at those two titles, Mudron also incorporated locations from Super Mario World, Super Mario RPG, Super Mario World 2: Yoshi's Island, and even Mario Kart into the Mushroom Kingdom map.

In addition to these elaborate maps, Mudron has created plenty



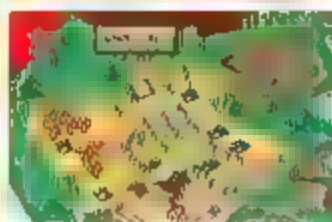
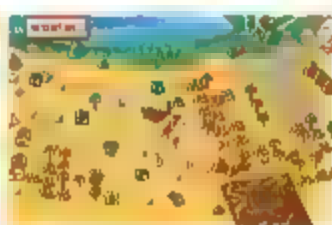
of non-map-based artwork. He tells us that his subjects "come from me just wanting to own cool stuff, and if I have an idea for something cool and see that no one else has done—yet—I'll just go ahead and draw it myself. No one's drawn a heart for homage, wallpaper for Etnier Otte's Jug-Band Christmas? Well, now know what I'm doing next week."

Still, he can't escape his love of Nintendo, so it's no surprise that he has created several homages to the company's various franchises. One of his favorite pieces is a tribute to Nintendo of America founder Minoru Arakawa and Nintendo Power icons Howard and Nester. (Mudron says that the Howard and Nester comics were a huge influence on him as a child.)

Currently, Mudron is working on a graphic novel that's tentatively titled *A Link to the Past: A History of Nintendo*. He is currently finishing up the script of the 200-page comic, and is planning to start drawing it this summer. In the meantime, he's already planning out his next map, which will be based on Konami's Castlevania series. Fans have requested maps

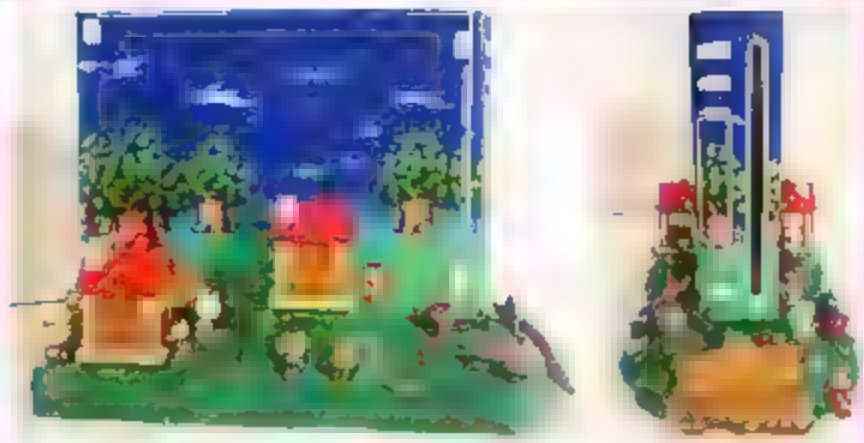
for the Metroid and Mega Man series, so Mudron will not be lacking for inspiration in the future.

We asked Mudron if he had any advice for aspiring artists. His response: "Take as many life-drawing courses as possible if you want to draw character-based artwork. Gorge yourself on big fat art books from the library as often as possible. Collect images from artists you appreciate and see what it is about their artwork that you love so much, and then try to distill what appeals to you down to something you can absorb into your own unique style. And try not to work for free just to get your name out there—that almost never works. Build a portfolio (either online or off) to show to friends, fellow artists, and potential clients. And really, never ever stop drawing. *Drawing is life.*" You can check out Mudron's video game maps and his other artwork at his website, billmudron.com. —PHIL



[Below] Before the beautiful, full-color maps are completed, they start as rough sketches like this version of Mudron's upcoming Castlevania piece.





MOD JOB

System Upgrade

City folk and country folk alike can marvel at this Animal Crossing tribute

IT ISN'T UNUSUAL to see fancy decals applied to make players' systems more aesthetically pleasing, but we've gotta hand it to Maria Rivera of Kansas City, Missouri, for concocting this gussied-up Wii in tribute to Animal Crossing. Rivera says it's the first of its kind she's seen on the Internet. Even if there were another one out there, probably wouldn't be as exhaustive, impressive, or as well executed as hers.

Rivera says she had to make this because of the personal attachment she feels to the game's characters. Using the Wii console's white space as a blank canvas, she overlaid

a screenshot from the game to make a custom skin for the system. Then she meticulously around the original Wii stand and spray-painted it green to look like a grassy hill. Next, she set out to find phone charms of Animal Crossing characters to populate that hill. And she admits, "It was tedious work trying to collect them all." Still, Rivera did it: she poured coins into capsule machines at a local anime shop to scoop up two different sets of the charms. The end result is a Wii console that's a veritable shrine to one of her favorite games. —DAVID W.



RANDOM

Portable Plush

Isn't that just the cutest cartridge you've ever seen?

CREATED FOR THE recent Super Button Mashers video game-themed show at the OhNo!Doo! gallery in Chicago, this fabulous plush Game Boy with accompanying Tetris cartridge comes from Steff Bomb, a 29-year-old artist best known for her adorable plush characters based on food. She says the decision was an easy one.

"My Game Boy was technically the first Boy I ever had a crush on," she admits. "I would take my Game Boy with me everywhere and play Tetris until my eyeballs would melt out of my skull. For me, sewing the Game Boy with the removable Tetris cartridge was a no-brainer."

Steff spent just over two weeks putting it together, starting by envisioning the entire project. "Sometimes instead of sleeping, I'll stay awake and think about how to sew things from start to finish," she explains, adding that she once did the same with Tetris strategies. "Though she's made a career out of plush creation after teaching herself to sew eight years ago, a project like this requires considerable effort—and once she'd created a pattern on cardstock, she had numerous foam and felt pieces to sew together to create its authentic final form."

The plush Game Boy was one of the true highlights of the show—and hopefully not the last gaming creation we see from Steff. She has a fantastic idea to make eggs from Adventure Island that "break open" to reveal plush skateboards, axes, and "weird bee fairies." —ANDREW H.

The Legend of Clay Link

A UK fan sculpts the Hyrulean hero in a remarkably simple fashion

OVER THE YEARS, Link from *The Legend of Zelda* has been rendered in innumerable forms, both in his games and by his fans. Donna Evans from Manchester, United Kingdom, has been drawing Zelda fan art since 2003 and has now sculpted a tribute to the iconic character. This sculpey clay sculpture, which took about four hours to make, is striking in both its simplicity and its ability to capture the "buddie wonder" many of us felt when we snagged our first piece of the Triforce.

When asked why Link can be portrayed in so many different styles while still retaining his core character traits, Evans suggests it's "probably because he's so charismatic. There are so many emotions Link is able to portray in the games without even saying a word. You love him in whatever shape or form."

This form is particularly eye-catching. Part of that is likely due to the use of FIMO polymer clay in the Triforce piece itself, which hovered above Link's head, shrouded with surprising texture. Evans painted the FIMO powder onto the unbaked clay base. When it all came out of the oven, presto, she had this work of art. —DAVID W.



CHRIS ENGLE
2012

FANDOM

Pit-ure Perfect

Pit and Palutena of *Kid Icarus* fame get a classic-cartoon makeover.

WITH THE RELEASE of *Kid Icarus* upcoming earlier this year, the last of Nintendo's Greek-mythology-inspired franchise led by the heroic Pit, has been thrust back into the limelight. Not only have gamers been seeing more of them, but *Kid Icarus* fans have been inspired to deliver their own unique takes on the character. Folks such as Daytown, Texas resident Christopher Engle, who submitted his versions of Pit and Palutena for your viewing pleasure.

"Classic cartoon shorts, such as *Looney Tunes* and *Tom & Jerry*, have been my greatest influence since the age of three," Engle tells us, and you can certainly see those influences in his

designs, including one in which Pit is "giving a Monomy what-for."

Engle shares that *The Super Mario Bros.* series, with its simple and colorful character designs, has inspired his work as well, though he's also quite fond of the vainglorious work of games from the *Zelda* series, like the cartoonish character in *Wind Waker* and the watercolor style of *Skyward Sword*.

When he's not drawing his favorite Nintendo characters, Engle is working on games. He's been involved with several retro-inspired favorites from Way of the Samurai, including *Mighty Milky Way*, *Mighty Switch Force*, and *Shantae: Risky's Revenge*. —RANDY N.





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NEXT MONTH

To help you make it through the dog days of summer, we'll review the season's hottest games, including Kingdom Hearts 3D and The Last Story. We'll also have lots more on upcoming Wii U titles and take a closer look at some of the year's most anticipated N3DS offerings. So grab an ice-cold beverage and we'll see you in 30!

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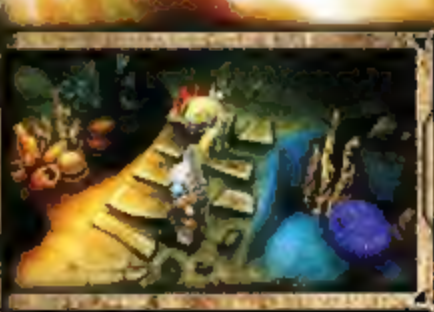
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